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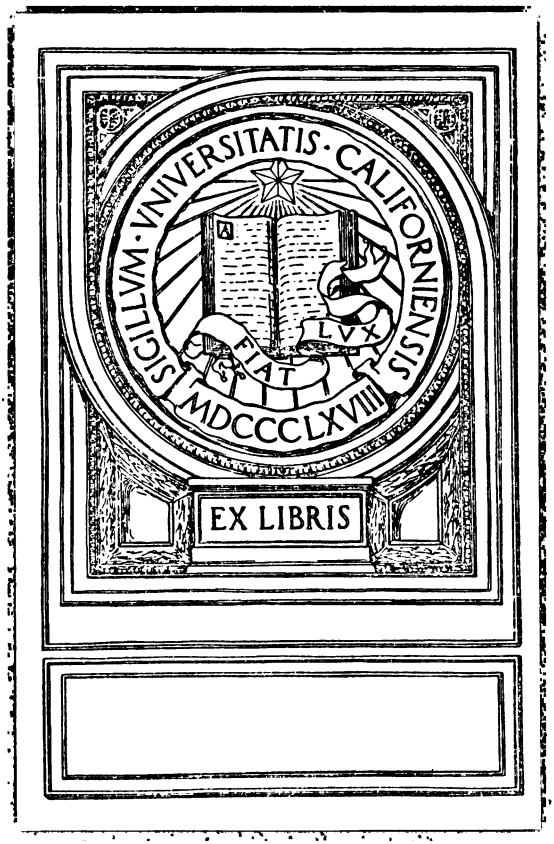

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SIR JOHN FIELDING. "THE BLIND MAGISTRATE."

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CHRONICLES

OF

BOW STREET POLICE-OFFICE

WITH AN ACCOUNT OF

THE MAGISTRATES, "RUNNERS," AND POLICE;

AND

A SELECTION OF THE MOST INTERESTING CASES.

BY

PERCY FITZGERALD, F.S.A.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

WITH NUMEROUS ILLUSTRATIONS.

LONDON—CHAPMAN AND HALL,

LIMITED.

1888.

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TO

GENERAL THE HON. WILLIAM FEILDING.

My dear General Feilding,

You will find that your ancestors, the illustrious author of "Tom Jones," and his brother, Sir John Fielding, figure prominently in the following pages, both exhibiting a rare spectacle of fortitude, in the performance of duty, under grievous physical infirmity. There is something appropriate, therefore, in inscribing this narrative to their descendant, while I at the same moment gratify myself by associating the name of an old friend with my labours.

PERCY FITZGERALD.

Athenæum Club,
June, 1888.

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PREFACE.

RECENTLY, in the course of the "improvements" round Covent Garden Market, the old Bow Street Police Office—for almost a century the scene of many exciting and eccentric incidents—was levelled to the ground, to be replaced by a spacious and commodious building. With it has gone a large portion of Inigo Jones' Piazza, notable for its elegant proportions and Italian air. Here were bound up many traditions and old associations which usually disappear, or are forgotten, when the old stones have been carted away. For nigh a century the old Court was the scene of many dramatic and eccentric incidents—engendered for the most part by the old school of manners and morals, long since happily reformed. Such are full of interest as illustrating a phase of forgotten London manners: and in the following pages I have attempted to furnish an account of what took place within those narrow precincts.

During the past twenty or thirty years, there have

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been many criminal cases of extraordinary dramatic interest, the incidents of which are but faintly remembered. It may be urged, indeed, that the serving-up these afresh is but pandering to an unwholesome taste. Such is indeed abundantly catered for in works like the Newgate Calendar; but it has always seemed to me that, quite apart from their tragic interest, such cases generally furnish extraordinary and even grotesque exhibitions of character: or odd and perplexing combinations of circumstances and evidence. These in themselves have extraordinary, even bizarro interest, such, for instance, as the curious and invariable tendency of criminals—when making a confession—to confess what is untrue. It is for this reason that I have dwelt at length on the remarkable case of Thurtell, which has always seemed to offer a sort of fascination from the weird, almost romantic incidents which attended it. Familiar as it is, and an oft-told tale, there will be here found much that is novel.

The "humours" of the Police Court, with the eccentricities of the magistrates and of their officers, are all duly recorded in these pages, in which, it is hoped, the "benevolent reader" will find entertainment.

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CHRONICLES

OF

BOW STREET POLICE-OFFICE

CHAPTER I.

BOW STREET.

At the top of Wellington Street, and close to the more crowded portion of the busy Strand, is to be found one of the most interesting spots in London, where exciting dramas of real life and passion, as well as their mimic reproduction, are daily played. This characteristic quarter has been always the centre of criminal as well as of theatrical life. The eyes of the actor, as well as those of the rogue, often turn to it with an almost painful interest; and there is hardly an hour of the day during which members of both communities may not be seen lounging opposite the buildings where their respective interests are concerned in some critical issue. Here, within a small area, are clustered the great theatres of Drury Lane and Covent

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Garden, with the Lyceum, and the costumiers, as also the newspaper in which players put forward their wants, and often their merits. Close by are the greater journals in which the merits and defects of the players are dealt with, and the favourite houses of resort and refreshment—the taverns and wine-shops, which are never without the cluster of professionals, busy discussing their hopes and grievances. In short, the quarter offers as distinctly marked and interesting characteristics of its own, as do others which the metropolis offers in plenty—such as the French quarter in Soho, the Banking district in the City, the Jew quarter, and others. Here, we come upon the entrance to the great Flower Market, lately the luckless Floral Hall, which was tried as a concert-room with equal lack of success. It has just reverted to its original purpose, and, at midnight, when the theatres have discharged their audiences, throws open its gates and begins its performance. Then the wains and carts draw up and begin unloading their fragrant burdens —all through the night the heavily laden vehicles are heard rumbling by, and by dawn every adjoining street is blocked—an extraordinary spectacle of business and industry, literally unknown to, and perhaps unthought of, by the lazy Londoner who rises late.

But there is a large section of the community for which none of these things offer so much interest as

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does an important building which has lately been reared opposite Covent Garden Theatre. For such a class the "Bow Street" office suggests strange and painful associations—an interest that is extended often to the respectable working-man's family. In such is commonly found some misguided youth, whom bad company or bad connections has brought to sad acquaintance with the initial processes of the law as established at BOW STREET.

A few years ago there used to be a painful and not undramatic scene witnessed every afternoon in the street, which furnished a sort of excitement for the motley and uncleanly crowd which never failed to attend. This was the arrival of the funereal-looking prison-van in front of the straitened little office door. Clustered round it, could be seen patiently waiting as strange a miscellany as could be conceived. It was then that the curious observer could study the habitual criminal "type," and note how mysteriously habits of crime seemed to impress revealing marks and tokens on face, expression, bearing, manner, dress. In older followers this evidence was not so conspicuous; but there was in the juvenile section, in the youths and girls—a strange and revolting air of precocity—a hardened air that would strike even the most careless. When at length the moment arrived, the circle narrowed, and the draggled procession began to emerge, each item having a separate display of his own. Then passed

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by, with an assumed bearing that was almost dramatic, the reckless prisoners, each being saluted with encouraging cries from the friends who had, with a touching loyalty, come to see him "off." Some "danced out," and tripped into the van with a familiar air; others, who had not recovered from the surprise of their sentence, passed on with a sturdy scowl. More painful was the shame of the decently-dressed first offender—victim, it might be, of circumstances, who shrank from the unclean, but really indifferent, gaze of the throng. For *them* even the shelter of the van was a relief. Almost as characteristic was the stolid *insouciant* bearing of the police in charge, who attended each prisoner forth with a carelessness that came of strength and security. The last guardian—the necessary blue papers in his hand—closed the strange defile, and locked himself in with the rest. Then came the strange cries of comfort and farewell from their "pals," those of experience uttering their words under the very floor of the van, and receiving some sort of response. And thus "Black Maria," heavily laden, and drawn by powerful steeds, reels off and sways as she moves, to discharge her load at one of the great prisons.

This strange and indecent scene had, until a few years ago, been repeated daily from the beginning of the century. It seems to have been an agreeable break in the day. Yet it was doing its part in the

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wholesale education in crime. It made familiar and recognized what ought to have been mysterious and unknown. Instead of being a vulgar show to be lightened by the encouragement of friends and "pals," it would have been far more wholesome that the criminal on sentence should have sunk out of view and have been at once lost to society. Happily, with the opening of new Bow Street offices in 1881, this salutary principle was recognized, and the degrading scene is no longer witnessed.

We may contrast with this picture what the old Bow Street and its neighbourhood was some fifty years ago. It shows how completely life and manners have changed in the interval, and how the so-called Bohemian elements have been eliminated. Where now is "Kelsey's" or "Harris's;" or the boys shouting "Bills of the play!" or the "Coal-Hole;" or the "ham-sandwiches a penny"?

"It is just half-past five, and the grey dawn is struggling in the east to diffuse a few faint rays over the western portion of the horizon. There are but few wanderers in the street at this early hour. St. Paul's, Covent Garden, chimes the hour of *six*, and the rumbling of market-carts laden with flowers and vegetables, now begins to disturb the tranquillity of the street. *Seven*, and blinds begin to be drawn up. The baker's shop has already opened, and at the oilman's, on the Broad Court corner, the shutters are

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being likewise taken down. *Eight*, and hot rolls, comfortably enveloped in green baize, emanate from the baker's. Now a youth suddenly rushes from Harris's towards the newspaper offices, and returns home laden with a copious supply of morning papers. The head waiter of the 'Garrick's Head' now makes a lingering appearance at the street door. *Nine*, and the shops are all opened, and people go to work in earnest. Peripatetic fruit-women begin to arrange their little stores and stalls for the day, and a crowd begins to assemble at the police-office, anxious to await the result of the morning's investigations. Those addicted to matinal moistenings now imbibe a drain of *max* at 'Kelsey's,' whilst the more prudent few indulge in the luxury of three-halfpennyworth of coffee for their morning draught. *Ten*, and the magistrates have taken their places at the bench; seedy individuals, with dilapidated castors and eleemosynary *kicksies*, wend their way slowly into the office, and the hairdresser's shop begins to be adorned with the bust of a particularly fascinating wax figure with corkscrew ringlets and lavishly-vermilioned countenance. *Eleven*, and actors, who had a call for a ten o'clock rehearsal, begin to bustle into the theatre with evident symptoms of perturbation and anxiety; managers look glum, and machinists nervous, whilst the prompter glances hatchets and tomahawks at those unlucky supers who have been three minutes behind time. Now do ladies,

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with pink parasols and sky-blue bonnets, hasten to Kenneth's, the dramatic agency office, for an engagement; the theatrical generally leading to a matrimonial one. *Twelve*, and Harris's shop gets thronged with votaries of the sock and buskin. Papers are read, notes are written, and criticisms spoken of. During that dreary interval invariably occurring at rehearsals, this is the spot where actors 'most do congregate,' and this is the tribunal where disputes, appertaining to the mimic art, are referred for decision. *One*, and the steaming vapour that exhales from the *cuisine* of the *Globe* begins to assail the nostrils of the peckish passenger. Collarless coves, with long frock coats, buttoned tight up to the throat to conceal the want of a waistcoat, now supply the cravings of nature by eagerly inhaling the savoury steam that indicates the kind of preparation going on below, thus making one sense relieve the privations of the other. And now the business of Bow Street labours under an interregnum of several hours' duration; a dread *hiatus* occurs in its proceeding, and, with the exception of Saturday, when the treasury delays their departure, scarcely an actor can at this time be observed in this previously Thespian-thronged thoroughfare. The first signs of returning animation are seen in the arrival of crowds and carriages at the Covent Garden portico, waiting for the opening of the doors. On every side rings the well-known cry of

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'Bill of the play, gentle*men*;' the last syllable receiving, from a habit, a double allowance of emphasis. Now comes the withdrawal of bolts; the rush of many feet and the crowd disappears, a few stragglers alone remaining undecided in the avenue. Crossing over the way to the tobacconists, we find a group of mingled amateurs and professionals chatting together at the door, or else seated upon diminutive casks, in the most theatrical and picturesque manner, imbibing the fumes of the choice cigar. Attentively perusing the play-bills that decorate one side of the wall, is a tall, thin young man, with a pale countenance and dark brown hair, falling in savage profusion over his coat collar. That is the *Hamlet* of the preceding night, a would-be aspirant to dramatic fame, and who, having *once* smelt the lamps at a minor theatre, will rest not until he has succeeded in getting an engagement at one of the theatres royal. Next to him stands one who played *Laertes* on the same night, and this very day week they play *Richard* and *Richmond* together, with the combat most awfully protracted, for that night only. But the performances have concluded, and the rumbling of carriages, hackney-coaches, and cabs is heard once more. The cry of 'Ham-sandwiches, only a penny,' blends most harmoniously with 'Coach unhired.' Some of the company wend their way to the Coal-hole, others to the Wrekin, whilst many, with visions of rump-steaks

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GARRICK'S HEAD

BOW STREET.

Exactly Opposite the Grand Entrance to the

ROYAL ITALIAN OPERA

Listen, ye Nocturnal Wanderers in pursuit of joyous hours after the arMoils of industrious daylight! Come & Sup at the **Garrick's Head**

NICHOLSON

HAS COME BACK, AND SO HAS

THE GRIDIRON

THE

JUDGE & JURY SOCIETY

At Nine o'Clock, after which the Lord Chief Baron departs from judicial dignity to become the Chairman of the lively board. Give him a look in!

Such Singing by Old and New Favourites!

Will you go, Bob? Yes. So will I,
And the old Baron's Gridiron try.
A Chop or Kidney at this hour.
With Pratee like a ball of flour:
Or Steak upon his Lordship's plan,
Will renovate the inward man;
A Sausage, Tripe, or Toasted Cheese,
Stout, Ale, or Water, which you please;
And after that up stairs repair,
To see the Baron in the chair.
To hear the lively song and joke,
A glass of Grog, and have a Smoke.
Come from Casino's mazy thread,
To Supper at the GARRICK'S HEAD!

Mr. NICHOLSON begs to solicit attention to the fact that the Front Coffee-room of the Establishment is **a Public Supper Room**, for Ladies and Gentlemen. The most Elegant **Private Dining and Supper Apartments** Up Stairs, for Large and Small Parties visiting the Theatres.

The Lord Chief Baron NICHOLSON politely reminds his Friends and Patrons of the great accommodation offered in this splendid Establishment. Excellent Bed Chambers, 1s. 6d.; Breakfast, with Eggs, or a Rasher of Bacon, 1s. 3d. Dinners and Nic Nacks from 1 o'Clock. A Hot Joint always at 6, the LORD CHIEF BARON presiding, charge 1s. 6d.

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and stout before their eyes, cross over to the Garrick. At the head of the table is Mr. Fly, the chairman, an eminent hand at the bass, often going down so low that it takes him half-an-hour to get up again. To the right is the tenor, Mr. Gorgon; at his elbow sits Mr. Tart, a very staid individual, who always seems as if he were going to laugh and *couldn't.* Listen to what emanates from the chair. 'Now, gentlemen, with your kind permission, we will attempt a glee.' Loud cries of 'Hear, hear,' and 'Bravo' resound throughout the room, and the glee is forthwith attempted. A capital glee it is, too, with plenty of ha! ha's! and clipping of monosyllables."

Bow Street, according to an old writer, took the name from its shape "running in the shape of a bent bow," as may be seen to this hour, on one side. The other side seems to have been somewhat straightened when the Opera House was built. It was once an exceedingly fashionable district, and, at its northern portion, was quite close to the country fields. About one hundred and twenty years ago it was almost as *recherché* as St. James's Street and the quarter about it now. Interesting, too, are the many historical associations which make the whole area "sacred ground." What a history would be that of Covent Garden Theatre alone, with its traditions of manager Rich, Peg Woffington, Garrick, Kemble, and the terrible "O.P." Riots, down to the fatal March 5,

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1856, when it was burnt to the ground, under the vulgar patronage of a "Wizard of the North." Some amateur had a souvenir made out of the charred remains, some four inches long by two and a half broad, its massive sides of highly-polished oak giving it an imposing look. Its edges are of the orthodox dull red, its back of morocco. The title is "Theatrical Ashes," and its wooden walls were cut from a partially burnt log of oak taken from the ruins of Covent Garden Theatre, after an orgie snobbishly called a *bal masqué*. There are many amateurs at this moment busy collecting all the facts and cuttings that bear on the history of Bow Street and the adjoining Covent Garden—on "the Hummums," lately rebuilt and rejuvenated, the Bedford Head, Inigo Jones's Church, Tom Davies' shop, and the curious and eccentric beings that "hung loose" upon the society of the district. The old antiquarian associations have been retailed at length in the innumerable topographical works on London, and scarcely concern us here. Wycherly, the dramatist, after his marriage with the Countess of Drogheda, was, according to an oft-told tale, so harassed at his fireside, that he often retired, for peace' sake, to the tavern opposite, but he was ordered to keep the windows open so that his lady might see with what company he was engaged. The old police-office, it is believed, stood upon the site of Waller the poet's house. It is curious to think that

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the well-known "ham-and-beef" shop at the corner, which still displays its old tiled roof, was once "Will's Coffee House," to which the most famous wits used to resort. And in Russell Street the house still stands where Boswell was introduced to Dr. Johnson. The vivacious O'Keeffe, when he first came to town, was deeply impressed by these recollections, and used to recall the speech in the "Constant Couple" where Beau Clincher talks of his going to the jubilee at Rome:—"Supposing the corner of a street—suppose it Russell Street here," &c. "Well, thought I," he adds in his natural way, "here am I at last, standing at the corner of Russell Street!" William Lewis, the comedian, lived in the very house in Bow Street that belonged to Wilkes, the original Sir Harry Wildair in the "Constant Couple;" and used the same private passage from it into Covent Garden Theatre. This Wilkes was an Irishman. Lewis also lived in another celebrated house: it was in Great Queen Street, on the right hand going to Lincoln's Inn Fields. In Queen Anne's reign it belonged to Dr. Radcliffe. Sir James Thornhill, the painter, lived in the next house, and I saw the very door the subject of Dr. Radcliffe's severe sarcasm against Thornhill. "*I don't care what he does with the door, so he does not paint it.*"

The older Bow Street office, a "squeezed" building, which had witnessed so many dramatic scenes, having lost its purpose, was allowed to linger on

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for some half a dozen years. It fell into the occupation of Stinchcombe, a well-known theatrical *costumier* and wig provider, who here carried on his duties till the middle of the year 1887. About September the Duke of Bedford was busy restoring the Floral Hall close by to its original function of a flower-market. The old-fashioned Bedford Hotel, which had once flourished under Inigo Jones' cheerful Piazzas—having been abandoned and reduced to being a warehouse for the sale of potatoes and other vegetables, was clearly on its way to demolition. There was a tract of valuable space between the hotel and the police office, for both were *dos-à-dos*. In October, as was to be expected, the *costumier* Stinchcombe had gone, hoardings had been put up, and in a few weeks not a vestige of old Bow Street office was left. Lately passing by, as three "housebreakers"—the professional name—were at their work, the old railings even attracted the eye, which were of a symbolical and impressive character; the supporting standards representing lictors' fasces with a double axe. The building was not a hundred years old. When Sir John Fielding, "the blind magistrate," succeeded his half-brother, the novelist, he came to live here in one or other of the two houses marked "4" and "4A." Here, under his extraordinary disability, he dispensed justice for forty years until the disastrous June of 1790, when the "No Popery" riots broke out, when, as was

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to be expected, so vigorous a chastiser of evil-doers was marked out for vengeance. His home was burnt to the ground, and the unfortunate magistrate himself died in the September following, at Brompton. On the ruins the late squalid and inconvenient buildings were erected, which served, in spite of all pressure and inconvenience, till a few years back. The history of a place such as Bow Street office would naturally be one of extraordinary interest owing to its curious not to say eccentric associations.

It has been stated that Mr. Burnaby, formerly chief clerk of Bow Street police-office, who retired from office several years ago, had kept a diary of his experiences in Bow Street. "Unfortunately, however, in the depth of his sorrow for the death of his son, he destroyed this record."[1]

April 4, 1881, was a day of mark in the Bow Street annals, for a boy named McCarthy was charged at the old office with having stolen some logs of wood, with a view to cutting them up into firewood. This was on a Saturday, and after his case was heard, the old office was closed for ever, and on the Monday, April 6 4, the business was removed to the new and rather ambitious offices over the way.

[1] However, this sense of irreparable loss is purely speculative, and always recalls the story of the letter which Johnson lost, and which the owner said was of enormous value when lost; but when it was after great exertion recovered and restored to him, he carelessly said "that it was of no consequence."

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"Antiquarians," says Mr. Sala, "of the type of Whitelocke and Howell, of Strype and Aubrey, of Pepys and Stow, and, above all, of old Peter Cunningham, will hereafter take note of a naughty little boy, named MacCarthy, who has stolen some logs. His offence is petty; and yet Master MacCarthy is the last prisoner who has been put at the bar of the old Bow Street police-court. To-day, we may remind our readers, the old Bow Street offices are closed finally, and henceforth their business will be transacted in the new block of buildings on the opposite side of the street. Indeed the condition of the old police-court had long been a public scandal. It had changed little, if at all, since Dickens described it in 'Oliver Twist,' and dwelt upon the general air of greasiness and of dirt which hung about it, and which seemed more or less to choke and to stifle the faculties and perceptions of all who were engaged in its business, from the Chief Magistrate himself down to the door-keeper. It was, in truth, an evil old place, and it is therefore, perhaps, pleasant to know that it will soon be swept away. In the earlier editions of the 'Newgate Calendar,' a work of immense research and of some value among bibliophiles, is a 'correckt viewe' of the Court-house at Bow Street. It is a 'commodious' room with a 'bar' across its midst. Behind the bar, at a table, sits the Magistrate, attired in a Court suit of the days of Goldsmith, and girt with a sword. By his side

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sits his 'clerke,' occupied in the 'reduction' of the depositions, and clad in a gorgeous periwig. The prisoner is guarded by a couple of Bow-street 'runners,' and the general public is represented by some dozen or so of fashionably-attired ladies and gentlemen, who are strolling about and exchanging snuff and pomander boxes, and watching the proceedings with a languid interest. Such was Bow Street in the days of the earlier editions of the 'Calendar,' when Jonathan Wild was still a hero. The Court was small, inconvenient, ill-ventilated, and approached by narrow and ill-arranged corridors. It would be, perhaps, too much to say that it was as badly laid out and badly managed as the Bail Court at Westminster, where the Court of Queen's Bench still sits."

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CHAPTER II.

HENRY FIELDING AND SIR JOHN FIELDING.

THE Bow Street Magistrates have always presented a special type, quite distinct from the functionaries who preside at the other offices. They were of a more interesting and dramatic kind, and exhibited a distinct personality, and marked points of character. Their names being brought prominently before the public are familiar, whereas the others are forgotten. This peculiarity, it will be seen, is owing to the nature of their functions. They were the heads and directors of such police as existed at the time; and like the French "Chiefs of Police," they not only arrested, but examined, the prisoner who was brought to them by their officers; hence the common phrase, so familiar by repetition, "of being brought up at Bow Street." The list is not a long one. Though the Bow Street office was not formally constituted by Act of Parliament until the year 1792, these magistrates administered justice there for many years before. We find Henry Fielding, the novelist, there in 1753; to be succeeded by his half-brother, Sir John Fielding, in 1761. The

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next was Sir W. Addington, in 1780, who was thus the first regular Bow Street magistrate. Next followed Sir R. Ford in 1800; Mr. Read in 1806; Sir Nathaniel Conant in 1813; Sir R. Baker in 1820; Sir R. Birnie in 1821; Sir F. Roe in 1823; Mr. J. Hall in 1837; Sir T. Henry in 1864; and Sir J. Ingham in 1876. Nearly all these functionaries were remarkable persons in their way; notably the two Fieldings, Sir R. Birnie, and in our time, Sir Thomas Henry. They were distinguished for energy, sagacity, a good common sense and quick decision; qualities which came of long practice and experience, and contact with the singular miscellany which daily passed before them. As will be seen further on, the Bow Street police-office was a sort of theatre, where performances of the most original and *bizarre* kind were given, and the "seamy" twists and turns of human character were displayed in endless variety.

In the last century there stood in St. John's Street, Clerkenwell, facing Smithfield, a court-house, described as "a very plain brick edifice, with a portico at the entrance." This was known as Hicks' Hall, and it was used by the Middlesex justices for holding their sessions. It was called Hicks' Hall, from being built by Sir Baptist Hicks, afterwards Lord Campden, who had been a merchant in Cheapside, and who had died in 1629. This building has long since been swept away.

This seat of justice is, however, most familiar to the

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world of letters, from its association with the much-ridiculed Sir John Hawkins, Knt., who presided there for many years, and who, mainly owing to Boswell's jealousy and dislike, has been considered a pompous, empty-headed, and even malignant being. The well-known distich—

> Here lies Sir John Hawkins,
> In his shoes and *stalkins*,

—was supposed to express his solemn and pedantic style of thought and utterance. Yet Sir John was a man of letters and a musician—was a friend and executor of Johnson, and wrote his life; a respectable and interesting performance, full of much curious information. Boswell, who was sensitive to a degree, and so tortured by his prejudices that he could not, even when he tried, hide them, seems to writhe as he thinks on the injury he suffered by being thus forestalled in his great work. Sir John also wrote a History of Music, which exhibits at least research; and finally, he was chairman of the magistrates at Hicks' Hall, to the duties of which he devoted himself with extraordinary enthusiasm. He was really a painstaking and successful magistrate, and intrepid when the occasion required. No doubt he was an old Tory and narrow-minded—qualities he often displayed to a ludicrous degree; but his merits seem considerable when contrasted with the qualifications of his brethren. These formed a singular

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miscellany." It used to be said of one of them" (says his daughter, Miss Letitia Hawkins), "whose name was David, and who had been a bricklayer at the east end of the town, where, by prescription, these *justices* were of the lowest order, that he never wrote more of his baptismal name than the first two letters, having a doubt in his mind as to one of the subsequent ones. I myself heard this personage say, that he had 'breakfasted on such a day with government, and that his daughter was going to send to government's daughter a present of a pair of turtle-doves.' He was soft in his manners; and if my father was at all less informed than was requisite to understanding him, he would patiently explain. For instance:—talking one day of 'the generals,' he saw that he was not perfectly clear; he therefore spoke more diffusely, and said, 'There are two generals, the soliciting general and the returning general.' Sir. J. H. thanked him for the trouble he had taken; they were now on equal terms, and could get on.

"So carelessly made were the appointments, and so easily were they obtained, that on one day a magistrate might be seen sitting at Hicks' Hall, and some weeks later would be brought up to receive sentence, in the Court of King's Bench, for corruption in his office. Nor was this corruption confined to those in an inferior station. The difficulties of administering pure justice often came from those who were high in office.

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A culprit with good connections could set potent forces in motion to work on the magistrate. He had tried a man for assaulting a sheriff's officer. I do not know whether the offence would not *now* be deemed *capital*, as it consisted in stabbing the man near the stomach. The man was found guilty, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment in Newgate. He petitioned the Crown, and my father had the usual letter from the Secretary of State, commanding him to report upon the case: he did so, but was very much surprised to find that, contrary to all usage, it was wished that he would reconsider his opinion; and above all, when he had done so, and only strengthened his report by argument, to hear that the remission of the sentence was to be looked for.

"While the matter was agitating over his head, solicitation to himself was not spared. The man set every engine to work, and somehow interested in his behalf a person of the name of Hutton, then at the head of the society of Moravians. I had the perusal of a most curious epistle, in pathetic bombast, which this advocate addressed to the lady of Sir Charles Whitworth, to obtain his mediation with my father. It began thus: "Will Lady Whitworth, in some easy moment," &c., &c. Her ladyship forwarded the supplication; and I remember Sir Charles bringing it to my father: but I fancy he saw the propriety of leaving the law to take its course.

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HENRY FIELDING, ESQ.R

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"An intimation that, if thus unreasonably counteracted, he should immediately quit the situation he held, was the last resource, and this succeeded: but while the offender was wearing out his sentence, carriages that told too much, were, by eight in the morning, seen at the door of Newgate; and, on inquiry, my father learnt that the Moravian trafficked in that favourite commodity, 'small diamonds.'"

Such was this frightful abuse of the "*Trading Justices*"—persons appointed to the Bench without any fit qualifications, and from the meanest class, and who indemnified themselves for their gratuitous services by taking bribes. This name, "*Trading Justice*," now happily without meaning, became a bye-word and a popular term of reproach.

It must not be supposed that all the members of the Magistrates' Bench were of the same pattern as this corrupt class. A striking contrast was Mr. Saunders Welch, an upright, accomplished man, who did his duty fearlessly; and Sir John Hawkins himself, who, for all his "stalkins," was an admirable official. Sir John had often the privilege of delivering charges to the grand jury of Middlesex, and these were, in general, marked by practical sense. Thus, on the rebuilding of Newgate, when it was proposed to throw the burden on the country at large, he disposed of the matter in a way that shows him to have been a man of sound judgment. The charge is, moreover, interesting, as

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showing the incredible neglect and abuses that prevailed in dealing with prisoners.

But we must turn back to two most conspicuous magistrates of Bow Street, who were really the founders of the police of London. These were Henry Fielding, the novelist, and his half-brother, John, afterwards Sir John. The services of these two men were of an extraordinary kind, when we consider that the first was altogether worn out, and not far from his death, when he took up the duties of his office; and that the second was blind! Yet these brothers carried on a battle *à outrance* with the criminal classes for nearly forty years, and which ended in complete victory.

Henry Fielding, as all his countrymen know, was dramatist, satirist, journalist, a Bohemian also, as it is called. Late in life he had become a novelist, then a barrister, when he vainly sought for practice, and finally obtained a magistracy. He, however, gave but the fragment of a dissipated, almost riotous life, and a constitution shattered by gout and various maladies, to his magisterial duties. He had turned to the Bar too late to make it profitable; and, through the interest, it was said, of Lord Lyttelton, was appointed a magistrate at Bow Street; adopted, it would seem, as a sort of *pis-aller*, a sort of promotion not unknown to our own generation. In what spirit he, at first, applied himself to the duties of his office, will

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be seen from a strange disorderly sketch, given by Walpole, and furnished on good authority. "Rigby," he says, about a year or two after Fielding's appointment, "gave me a strong picture of nature: he and Peter Bathurst t'other night carried a servant of the latter's, who had attempted to shoot him, before Fielding; who, to all his other avocations has, by the grace of Mr. Lyttelton, added that of Middlesex Justice. He sent them word he was at supper; that they must come the next morning. They did not understand that freedom, and ran up, where they found him banqueting with a blind man, a wife, and three Irishmen on some cold mutton and a bone of ham, both on one dish—and the dirtiest cloth. He never stirred or asked them to sit. Rigby, who had seen him so often come to beg a guinea of Sir C. Williams, and Bathurst, at whose father's he had lived, for victuals, understood that dignity as little, and pulled themselves chairs;—on which he civilized."[1]

The "blind man" who shared in this squalid revel was, of course, his brother and assistant. But the manly spirit of the novelist soon rose to the responsibility of his situation. He took up his duties with ardour: planned reforms; strove hard to check the disorders of the streets; captured thieves and highwaymen, and was indefatigable in examining malefactors at his house in Bow Street. He suggested ideas for passing

[1] "Letters," vol. ii. 162.

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wholesome Acts of Parliament; and discussed in pamphlets various notable cases which had excited public sympathy. One of these was the curious one of Pen Lez, which excited much public interest and discussion.

An extraordinary riot took place in 1749. The sailors were discontented at the time, and one night one of them rushed into the street complaining that he had been robbed in a house of doubtful character, which, strange to say, was in the Strand. As occasionally happens, a phrenzy of virtuous indignation seized on the mob: there were clamours for the destruction of the house, and of all such places where "honest mariners" were so ill-treated. The street was filled with infuriated crowds. They attacked a tavern called "The Star," where enormities were supposed to be practised, and set it on fire. An obnoxious draper's house was also attacked; his goods were carried out, and heaped up in front, to be set on fire. But the police were active, and prevented further destruction. A young man who was seen running away was seized, and some of the plundered linen was found upon him. It was attempted to bring him away to prison, but the crowd was so violent that the soldiers had to be sent for. Fielding ordered him to be taken to Newgate, but he was eventually brought to his house in Bow Street, to be examined. An enormous crowd collected in front of the house while

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the examination was going on; and the magistrate, always intrepid, appeared at the window and addressed the people, charging them to disperse.

The prisoner was named Bosaven Pen Lez, or Penley, and was a respectable young man, the son of a Welsh clergyman. His story, on being arrested, was that his wife, or some woman, had made away with his domestic linen—a not very intelligible justification. He was tried, and sentenced to death. Immense efforts were made to save him, but he was eventually executed. Fielding published a pamphlet on the subject, vindicating the authorities and his own conduct in the transaction. To this task he brought all his knowledge of law, proving by Acts of Parliament, and comments thereon, the justice of the sentence. He furnishes the depositions of the witnesses, and, it must be said, makes out his case.

Another more celebrated case was that of Eliza Fenning, which still more excited the public, and was hotly debated in the newspapers and in pamphlets. One of the latter was contributed by Fielding, who once more vindicated the action of the authorities. The general opinion, however, was that the supposed criminal, who maintained her innocence on the scaffold, was innocent.

There is something touching in the circumstances which signalized the close of his labours. Always manly, straightforward, and thorough, his resolution

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was never more displayed than when, utterly broken in health and fortune, he unflinchingly applied the last few months of his life to the serious question of grappling with the crime which, of a sudden, had infested the streets of the metropolis. He had been appointed a magistrate in 1749, and was destined to hold the post but five years only; but they were years of activity and exertion. His name must be always associated with reform at Bow Street. Borne down with disease and suffering, he was on the eve of setting out for Lisbon in the vain hope of finding cure, or at least alleviation. The state of London, its utter insecurity and disorder, had long engaged his most anxious thoughts. His experience as a magistrate furnished him with daily proofs of these disorders, many of which are found in his striking novel of "Jonathan Wild." He injured his impaired health by his exertions. He often sat sixteen hours out of the twenty-four, for it long continued the custom for the magistrate to return about seven o'clock and sit on till midnight, so as to be on the spot to deal with offenders. Many of the magistrates contrived to largely increase their incomes by taking bribes or by a system of perquisites;—*Trading Justices* as these were called. Fielding, however, disdained these courses.

"I had vanity enough," he tells us, "to rank myself with those heroes of old times, who became voluntary sacrifices to the good of the public. But lest the reader

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should be too eager to catch at the word *vanity*, I will frankly own, that I had a stronger motive than the love of the public to push me on: I will therefore confess to him, that my private affairs at the beginning of the winter, my compromising the quarrels of porters and beggars—which, I blush to say, has not been universally practised—and my refusing to take a shilling from a man who most undoubtedly would not have another left, I reduced an income of about 500*l.* a year of the *dirtiest* money on earth to little more than three hundred, an inconsiderable portion of which remained with my clerk. A predecessor of mine used to boast that he made 1000*l.* a year in his office; but how he did it, is to me a secret. His clerk, now mine, told me I had more business than he had ever known there: I am sure I had as much as any man could do. The truth is, the fees are so very low, and so much is done for nothing, that if a single justice of the peace had business enough to employ twenty clerks, neither he nor they would get much by their labour. The public will, therefore, I hope, think I betray no secret, when I inform them that I received from Government a yearly pension out of the public service-money, which I believe indeed would have been larger had my great patron been convinced of an error"—and here he supplies a happy ironical touch—"*that mine was a lucrative office.*"

"About the latter end of the year 1753," says the

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blind magistrate, "a most notorious gang of street robbers, in number about fourteen, dividing themselves in parties, committed such daring robberies, and at the same time such barbarities, by cutting and wounding those they robbed, as spread a general alarm through the town." He then describes how the King issued his proclamation offering 100*l.* reward for the apprehension of any one of the gang. But this step "though humanely intended as a remedy for the evil," was actually to increase it, for the hope of the reward made some villains decoy many "unwary and ignorant wretches" into committing robberies, then giving them up and claiming the money. It was this state of things that led to the Duke of Newcastle's sending for Henry Fielding.

In short, the town seemed to be in complete possession of the thieves and housebreakers. These flourished in regular gangs. The community was helpless. There was no police, to speak of; and Fielding, almost in despair, was driven to devise plans for the extirpation of the evil. In August he was sent for in a pressing way by the Duke of Newcastle, and at once repaired to his house, where, after being kept waiting, he was sent away. He was, however, invited to submit a plan for dealing with the evil. He simply asked to have a sum of 600*l.* placed at his disposal, and engaged to clear the town of marauders. He tells the result in his own graphic way :—

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"After some weeks the money was paid at the Treasury, and within a few days after 200*l.* of it had come into my hands the whole gang of cut-throats was entirely dispersed, seven of them were in actual custody, and the rest driven, some out of the town, and others out of the kingdom. Though my health was now reduced to the last extremity, I continued to act with the utmost vigour against these villains, on examining whom, and in taking the depositions against them, I have often spent whole days, nay sometimes whole nights. . . . Meanwhile, amidst all my fatigues and distresses, I had the satisfaction to find my endeavours had been attended with such success, that this hellish society was almost utterly extirpated, that, instead of reading of murders and street robberies in the newspapers, almost every morning, there was in the remaining part of November and in all December not only no such a thing as a murder, but not even a street robbery was committed. In the entire freedom from street robberies during the dark months, no man will, I believe, scruple to acknowledge that the winter of 1753 stands unrivalled."

Yet this intrepid magistrate was at the moment a dying man; dying, as he said, "in a deplorable condition, with no fewer or less diseases than a jaundice, a dropsy, and an asthma, all together uniting there for the destruction of his body."

Never surely was there such a spectacle of a duty so

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calmly undertaken, without flourish. "I was now," he said, "in the opinion of all men, dying of a complication of disorders." But he could not resist mentioning three simple facts; one that the "proclamation offering 100*l.* for the apprehending felons for certain felonies, which I prevented from being revived, had formerly cost the Government several thousand pounds within a single year; secondly, that all such proclamations, instead of curing the evil, had certainly increased it, and multiplied the number of robberies; thirdly, that my plan had not put the Government to more than 300*l.* expense, and had actually suppressed the evil for a time. I had plainly pointed out the means of suppressing it for ever—this I myself would have undertaken had my health permitted—at the annual expense of the above-mentioned sum."

Having performed this signal service to the State, he resigned his office, and in very touching fashion speaks of the little provision he was enabled to make for his family; then set off on his "Voyage to Lisbon," of which he has left so graphic and interesting an account. His cheerfulness and spirit never abated, though his sufferings for want of surgical attendance were great. He died shortly after his arrival, and his grave is one of the spots of interest for all Englishmen who visit that capital.

And here it may be said that one of the special products of the nation, exemplified in his person, is

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the modest, hardworking, sensible magistrate, who receives, and indeed does not seek, little approbation for his service, and who day after day, from year's end to year's end, works on at his monotonous duties, in a crowded, unhealthy court—painstaking, and never flagging in his exertions. It is only when we compare him with his showy brother in France, who is ever "playing to the gallery," and takes but little heed of the prisoner's interests provided he himself can make a display, that we see his genuine merit.

It will be seen that Mr. Fielding does not tell us what his notable plan was for the destruction of the robbers, though we look for the details with considerable curiosity. The truth was, he was rather too sanguine about it, and, as his brother tells us, it was only a temporary relief, for presently "a fresh gang, as desperate though not so numerous as the former, made its appearance," which had to be taken in hand by the blind brother, who now comes on the scene with a bandage on his eyes, thus literally reproducing the familiar image of Justice. It was always a strange spectacle for the numerous thieves and forgers who were "brought up" at Bow Street to find themselves in presence of a *blind* magistrate, who we may be sure furnished a stale topic of illustration to the reporters, and other scribes, in the fact that "justice ought to be blind." Not many years ago there flourished in Ireland a certain ancient Baron of the Exchequer who

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went circuit, heard "motions," "charged" juries, and went through all his judicial duties with fair credit and success, though "stone blind." The recent instance of the lamented Mr. Fawcett, as postmaster-general, whose duty is the care of letters, is a more curious instance still. Mr. John Fielding's remaining senses and faculties seem, however, to have been quickened in an extraordinary degree by his loss, and he acquired a reputation as a singularly prompt, vigorous, and successful magistrate.

Dr. Somerville gives a sketch of him which supplies yet one more instance of the skill with which blind persons contrive to make up for the infirmity which itself seems to stimulate and develop other gifts. The doctor describes the arrest of a fellow-passenger in the coach, a forger, and how the blind magistrate only a few hours later, setting his emissaries to work, had discovered the lodgings of all the other passengers.

"I was so much amused and interested," he says, "with the appearance of Sir John Fielding, and the singular adroitness with which he conducted the business of his office, that I continued there for an hour after the removal of Mathewson, while Sir John was engaged in the investigation of other cases. Sir John had a bandage over his eyes, and held a little switch or rod in his hand, waving it before him as he descended from the bench. The sagacity he discovered in the questions he put to the witnesses, and a marked and

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SIR JOHN FIELDING IN HIS COURT.

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successful attention as I conceived, not only to the words, but to the accents and tones of the speaker, supplied the advantage which is usually rendered by the eye; and his arrangement of the questions leading to the detection of concealed facts, impressed me with the highest respect for his singular ability as a police magistrate."

Almost at once he put his brother's plan into operation against the revived gangs. The idea appears to have been the philosophical and radical one of cutting off the source of supply, and destroying the haunts or "nests" where these criminal pests were engendered. He would thus begin by putting down "low music meetings and dances," where thieves met each other; by abolishing "begging and street-walking;" and by harrying and harassing the whole community until it found its occupation intolerable.[2] "These reigning gangs of desperate street robbers were attacked, and in the space of three months no less than *nine* capital offenders were brought to justice,—though not without bloodshed, for one of Mr. Fielding's people was killed and one of the robbers cut to pieces,—among whom were the famous Birk, Gill Armstrong, and Courteney. Nor has any considerable gang appeared since, till lately. The next set of villains," viz. the highway-

[2] See his tract, "An Account of the Origin and Effects of a Police set on foot by his Grace the Duke of Newcastle in 1753, upon a plan presented to him by the late Henry Fielding, Esq. 1758."

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men that robbed near town, "were by this new method brought to justice; so that scarce one has escaped from that time to this." The worthy Sir John quite gloats over his performances in this line. The lead-stealers—a distinct profession—and house-breakers were next pursued and harried, until they were totally dispersed and sent to Tyburn. These "more considerable objects being removed," the vast shoal of pickpockets, shoplifters, &c., were left at his mercy, and were every day taken up in numbers. He mentions a curious instance of four infant thieves, the eldest five years old, who were brought before him, and who were proved to be all children of different persons collected by one woman to "beg and steal, *to furnish that beast with gin.*"

One of his methods for protecting the suburbs, then almost at the mercy of the highwaymen, was the inviting of small subscriptions to defray the expense which he could not obtain from the City or Crown. This part of his scheme is thus described :—

"*Substance of Mr. Fielding's Plan for preventing Robberies, within twenty miles of London.*

"He proposes that any number of gentlemen, for instance twenty, whose country houses are situate at different distances from five to twenty miles from London, subscribe two guineas each, to be lodged in the hands of one of the subscribers. That this money be

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subject to the draughts of all the subscribers, and if any highway robbery be committed in the neighbourhood of any of the subscribers, let the first that hears of it obtain an exact description of the robber, his horse (if he had one), and whatever is taken from the person robbed. This let him put in writing, always adding, if possible, the name and place of abode of the party robbed; for it sometimes happens when a highwayman is apprehended, that the prosecutor not being to be found, the former escapes justice and is let loose again upon the public. Next let a man and horse be immediately hired and despatched to Mr. Fielding, in Bow Street, Covent Garden, with full authority to that gentleman to advertise it in what manner he thinks proper, and to receive of the treasurer of the subscription the expense of the advertisements. Meantime let the messenger communicate to all the bye-ale-houses, public-inns, and turnpikes, in his way to and from London, the robbery, with a verbal description of the man and horse. On the messenger's returning to the subscriber who sent him, and producing a testimony from the justice of his having delivered to him the said description, and setting forth the hour of his arrival in town, the subscriber shall give the messenger a draught upon the treasurer for such a sum of money as he shall think he deserves. Now as the acting magistrate, besides having the whole civil power within his jurisdiction at command, can every

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day, upon notice given of any robbery, call together a number of men, always ready to pursue and attack the most daring villain, it must be impossible for villains ever to escape justice.

"The alehouse-keepers, stable-keepers who let horses to hire, and pawnbrokers should constantly read the advertisements inserted by Mr. Fielding in the Public Advertiser. The first would then never harbour a rogue; the second would never furnish a highwayman with a horse, without knowing it time enough to detect him and save the horse; and as to the latter they have already found so many advantages from what is here recommended that nothing farther need be said."

Sir John, like his brother, had a keen sense of humour, and utilizing his experience, published some advice to the public in reference to thieves and sharpers, the very form of which has a droll turn. It was printed on a sheet. This was a "Description of London and Westminster," published in 1776; and to this he added, "*Proper Cautions* to the Merchants, Tradesmen, and Shopkeepers; Journeymen, Apprentices, Porters, Errand Boys, Book-keepers, and Innkeepers; *also very necessary* for every person going to London either on business or pleasure." They are to be wary of what he calls "*Sky Farmers*," one of whom dresses himself extremely genteel, and takes upon himself either the character of a private gentleman or

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respectable tradesman. He is attended by two men in the character of country farmers, with clumsy boots, horsemen's coats, &c. The objects pitched upon for imposition are good charitable old ladies, to whom the sky farmer tells a dreadful story of losses by fire, inundation, &c., to the utter ruin of these two poor farmers and all their families; their wives are with child, their children down with the small-pox, &c. A book is then produced by the sky farmer, who undertakes this disagreeable office purely out of good nature, knowing the story to be true. In this book are the names of the nobility and gentry set down by himself, who have contributed to this charity; and by setting out with false names, they at length get real ones, which are of great service to them in carrying on their fraud; and these wretches often obtain relief for their false distresses, whilst the really miserable suffer, from their modesty, the asserted afflictions. A woman stuffed so large as if she was ready to lie in, with two or three borrowed children, and a letter giving an account of her husband's falling off a scaffold, and breaking his limbs, or being drowned at sea, &c., is an irresistible object.

"But the highest rank of cheats," he continues, "*who attack the understanding* have made use of the following stratagems:—One of the gang, who is happiest in his person, and has the best address, is pitched upon to take a house, which, by means of the

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extreme good character given of him by his comrade to the landlord, is soon accomplished. The next consideration is to furnish it, when Mr. ——, a young ironmonger, just set up, is pitched upon to provide the squire's grates, who, glad of so fine an order, soon ornaments his chimneys with those of the newest fashion. This being done, Mr. ——, the upholsterer, is immediately applied to for other furniture, and is brought to the house, in order that he may see the grates, which he no sooner beholds than he tells his honour that he could have furnished him likewise with grates of the best kind at the most reasonable rates, to which Squire Gambler replies that he intends taking some little villa in the country, where Mr. —— shall furnish everything he can.

"The house being now completely furnished, the squire dresses himself in his morning gown, velvet cap, and red morocco slippers, puts one or more of his comrades into livery, then sends for the tailor, linen-draper, silversmith, jeweller, &c., takes upon him the character of a merchant, and by getting credit of one, by pawning the goods the moment he has got them he is enabled to pay ready money to others; by which means he extends his credit and increases his orders till he is detected; which sometimes does not happen till he has defrauded tradesmen to a very considerable value.

"There is a set of sharpers who have lately purchased several estates without money in the following

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manner:—They make a bargain with the seller, or his agent, and promise to pay the purchase-money at such a time; they then go to the tenant and show him the articles of agreement, and tell him that he will soon have a new landlord, upon which the former begins to complain of the old one, and hopes his honour will repair this, rebuild that, and alter something else, which the landlord promises to do. Credit being thus gained with the tenant, the new landlord falls in love, perhaps, with the farmer's daughter, or with a fine horse, or else borrows money of him and gives him a draught upon his banker in town, who seldom has any cash in hand, and often is not to be found.

"The old trick of *ring-dropping* is practised by fellows who find a paper full of 'gold rings,' which they take care to pick up in the sight of a proper object, whose opinion they ask, saying that he had rather have found a good piece of bread and cheese, for he had not broken his fast for a whole day; then wishes the gentleman would give him something for the rings, that he might buy himself a pair of shoes, a coat, &c. He will immediately bite, and thinking to make a cheap purchase of an ignorant fellow, gives him 20*s.* for four or five brass rings washed over. Or, what is more frequent, and yet more successful, is the picking up of a shilling or a half-crown before the face of a countryman, whose opinion of it is immediately asked, whether it be silver or not, and he is invited to

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share the finder's good luck in a glass of wine or a pot of ale. The harmless countryman, pleased at such an invitation in a strange place, is carried to an ale-house where the sharper's friends are waiting for him, and where cutting or playing at cards is soon proposed, and the countryman most certainly tricked out of all his money, watch, and everything valuable he has about him." All which shows how well skilled was the blind magistrate in the tricks and devices of the fraternity. The style is pleasant enough, and has the ironical flavour of that of his more gifted brother.

This excellent man was knighted by the king in 1760, one of the first acts of his reign.

So vigorous was he in the prosecution of his duties, and such a terror to the evil-doer, that he incurred much odium, and received a threatening letter informing him that "the die was cast, and the knight's fate was determined." This was because he had refused bail in the case of a woman named Chandler, accused of stealing lace.

In 1771 we find Mrs. Cornelys giving her celebrated masquerades in Soho Square, a portion of her ball-room being now the Roman Catholic Chapel. She however added the attraction of a dramatic performance, which brought down the ire of the sturdy blind magistrate upon her. She was summoned to Bow Street, and convicted in a penalty of 50*l.* for this illegal performance. It was said that "the noblemen

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and gentlemen who patronize her puppet opera are so exasperated at a certain justice, that they have entered into very large subscriptions to answer all the penalties that may be levied on her." The speech of the magistrate was admirable, if a little eccentric, and after his own special manner. "Rank," he began by saying, "when it shall be opposed to law will never convey any idea of fear to this bench, but on the contrary, it ought and will animate the magistrates to greater exactitude and attention." After dwelling on the number of places of amusement in the metropolis, all under proper regulations, he proceeded in this rather sarcastic vein:—"In the first place there are two Theatres Royal under the management of two of the greatest geniuses that ever were in the same situation. Then at the Theatre Royal in the Haymarket you have everything elegant that music can produce, and over the way you have the great Mr. Foote, who makes us shake our sides with laughter. Then have you Ranelagh, the politest place of amusement in Europe, under the direction of the great Sir Thomas Robinson. At Sadler's Wells you have everything to entertain that tumbling and feats of activity can afford. At Marylebone you have music, wine, and plum cake. Then you have the White Conduit House and other tea-drinking houses all round the town, and what honest Englishman can say he wants amusement? Surely it is evident that luxury has been taking such gigantic strides as

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ought to make magistrates jealous of dire dangerous progress. And before I conclude I cannot help observing that what the magistrates, the counsel, and the witnesses said on Feb. 20th, *as well as what none of them said*, has been published in a newspaper, and though I again repeat that I wish all my actions, not as a magistrate only, but as a man, might be known through the whole world, and though I am content that every one who heard me be a short-hand writer, yet do I desire that nothing may be published but the truth, for I fear not truth, but misrepresentation."

Like many persons afflicted with so serious an infirmity, Sir John seems to have grown into a morbid state of sensitiveness. This was particularly shown in his relations with that most amiable of actors, Garrick, to whom, like Charles Surface in the case of Sir Peter, it is to be feared "he had given considerable uneasiness." A play of his brother's, the novelist, bearing the same title as one of Goldsmith's, viz. "The Good-Natured Man," had been found, and it was suggested that it should be brought out. Garrick took up the project with much ardour and warmth, but he found difficulties and delays, as the piece in its existing state was not suited to the stage. The touchy magistrate thought he saw a desire to withdraw from the engagement, and hence arose an angry feeling which embittered their future intercourse in a very grotesque way.

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"The beginning of my correspondence with Sir John Fielding," wrote Garrick in a MS. letter, now before me, and dated 1772, "was thus:—His brother, the late Mr. Fielding, and my particular friend, had written a comedy, which being lent to his different friends, was lost for twenty years. It luckily fell to my lot to discover it. Had I found a mine of gold upon my own land, it would not have given me more pleasure. I immediately went to his brother and told him the story of my discovery, and immediately, with all the warmth imaginable, offered my services to prepare it for the stage. He thanked me cordially, and we parted with mutual expressions of kindness."

But during the course of these proceedings, Sir John grew fretful and impatient of delay, and showed his irritation in a curious way. A French pyrotechnist had come to London with strong recommendations to Garrick, who had assisted him to obtain leave to give his exhibition. This manager was astonished to receive a letter from the magistrate reproaching him with doing what was contrary to law.

"Dear Sir," wrote the good-humoured actor, "if I were sure you would not laugh, I should be very angry with you. What can you possibly mean by telling my brother that *you are surprised at my countenancing Torrè in an illegal act?* Are you really serious, or, what I like much better, joking with me? You cannot sure be misled by newspaper intelligence. The affair

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between me and Torrè stands thus," and he proceeded to give an account of his share in the business. "This is the plain fact; and how they can accuse me of *countenancing Torrè in an illegal act*, by being merely civil and friendly to an ingenious, worthy stranger, recommended to me by one who had been particularly civil and friendly to me, I shall leave to your own judgment. I have consulted no lawyer for him, nor applied to any magistrate, nor have I conversed with any upon the subject but yourself; so, my good friend, pray explain yourself to me. I wish Torrè well, for he has great worth, spirit, and genius, in his way. But I would not countenance my *brother* in an illegal act. I honour the laws of my country, and no man, I trust, less offends them than, dear sir, your most obedient servant."

Not being able to quarrel on this topic (and it was exceedingly difficult to quarrel with Garrick), Sir John next took objection to the business of the play. He "takes the liberty of communicating his opinion of his brother's play, which he found too long, and wanting in business. There is certainly *a very daub* of caricature in young Kennel. I wish it were possible to encourage his economy of oaths. Further, the two expressions 'spindle-shanked beau' and 'rampant woman's immorality' are *most abominable*."

This was amusing enough. But a more serious business presently occurred, arising out of a quarrel

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behind the scenes between the manager's brother and Mr. Addington, another Bow Street magistrate, who had turned dramatist and had been roughly or unceremoniously treated. This gentleman having written to assure Garrick that Sir John had said nothing against him and had no share in the quarrel, Sir John himself wrote with acerbity to the same effect. He had no intention of giving offence, and "he took the opportunity of *cautioning him against misrepresentation.*" Garrick replied, and it is curious how their language became gradually inflamed, that "with a proper regard for Sir John, he shall not now mention in its proper colours, the false accusation and unjustifiable behaviour of one of his friends to his brother, whose warmth was too natural to merit the severe censure it met with. Mr. Garrick imagined that the great compliment he paid the police by giving up his interest to their opinion, deserved justice, at least, from any magistrate in Westminster."

This thrust angered the blind magistrate exceedingly. He wrote in reply :—

"Sir John Fielding has too great a value for his own character, to give himself the least trouble in settling the etiquette between Mr. Garrick as manager, and Mr. Addington as an author. Nor shall he interfere otherwise than to show him what ungenerous treatment he has met with on his account, but if Mr. Garrick would be *manly enough* to say in what instance through

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life Sir John ever gave him offence—he is persuaded he can undeceive him; for, although he hates defending and proving, he should always think it his duty to give a *satisfactory answer to the lowest and meanest of his Majesty's subjects*, for to save and serve, and oblige, has always been his principle. And it is rather extraordinary that because Sir John Fielding, being ashamed at some very severe conversations that threatened the welfare of his reputation, should communicate his apprehensions in the most delicate manner, and because on the same day he used his utmost endeavours to prevent his brother George from exposing himself, and that from an act of friendship to David Garrick, and an act of humanity to his poor infirm brother, he should not only be treated with disrespect himself, but oceans of anathema to be denounced against the innocent family of his brother to whom, if fame be of any value, Mr. Garrick has the highest obligations. . . .

"As we are not likely to meet again, permit me to say that I hope I am mistaken in declaring that you are egregiously so; I therefore most sincerely forgive you all your unkindness. I hope you will recover your health. You will be pleased to take notice that in the course of my life I have ever stood forth, and once with great danger to shelter David Garrick from the resentment of the public, and that I have twice interfered to prevent disputes between his brother and Mr. Addington

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being carried to improper lengths. That I have twice been insulted for these kind offices, that I have never received favour from Mr. Garrick in the course of my life."

This was becoming a serious and painful quarrel.

"Your worship grows out of humour," Garrick replied, "and I have not, I hope, been uncivil or out of temper." Then saying that he was just out of an illness, "We will, if you please, not be the trumpets of our own virtues, but take care the innocent do not suffer by our own mistakes. Now that it is past you are sorry you used such language. . . . 'Barbarity' is as much a stranger to my nature as falsehood is to yours. If you have obliged and honoured me, I thank you; that you never were in the way to be obliged by me is certain, or I should have done it. Some reciprocal acts of kindness passed between your brother and me, too trifling to be remembered." After promising to do all he could about the play, and for the family, he concluded, "*What you have said kindly I will remember, what unkindly I will forget.*" We think this a charming and a model letter, clever as it is admirable.

In September 1773, Garrick had announced the Beggar's Opera for performance—when Sir John came to the Bench of Justices and announced to them that this piece was dangerous to morals, and increased crime. He had written, in the last year, to Mr. Garrick begging of him not to perform it. He now

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begged therefore the magistrates to join with him in remonstrating with the manager, who had announced it for the following Saturday. Sir John declared that it was never performed on the stage without creating an additional number of real thieves. The Bench immediately agreed, and "a polite card was despatched to Mr. Garrick" for that purpose. To which Mr. Garrick returned for answer that his company was so imperfect and divided (many of the performers being yet in the country) that it would be exceedingly inconvénient, if not impossible, to open with any other piece than that which he had advertised, but added that he would in future do everything in his power to oblige them.

But four years later, when Garrick was about to retire from the stage, and all the world was offering their valedictions, the worthy old magistrate felt compunction, and sent his tribute with the rest.

"Sir John Fielding presents his compliments to Mr. Garrick, and does most sincerely congratulate him on his retirement from the theatre whilst in full possession of his extraordinary talents, and whilst riches and fame, with united charms, invited his longer stay on the stage. From this manly resolution there is every reason to hope that this retirement will be adorned by elegance, hospitality, and cheerfulness, *to the great benefit of his select friends.* And though it has fallen to his lot to be the object of a very premature resent-

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ment, who ought to be that of his esteem and respect, he shall always take delight to say (as he can do it with justice) *that the chastity of Mr. Garrick*, as a manager of a public theatre, and his exemplary life as a man, have been of great service to the morals of a dissipated age; and whilst posterity shall behold him as an inimitable actor, they will no less admire him as a good man. These, sir, are the sentiments of your sincere friend and obedient humble servant, J. Fielding.

"P.S.—This, sir, is a tribute which I have already paid to the distinguished merit of many whose retirement like yours has been the effect of wisdom and prudence."

There is here a quaint old-fashioned term of phraseology, that is very refreshing, notably, in the passages that are underlined. As a matter of course the retiring manager met him in the same cordial spirit :—

"Mr. Garrick presents his best compliments to Sir John Fielding, and is very happy in receiving so flattering a mark of the approbation of one whom he always esteemed and respected. No one is more sensible of Sir John Fielding's merit, nor has more publicly declared it." He was only jealous that an "old family connection of love and regard was given up to a late acquaintance. He will be more cheerful if Sir John will come and dine occasionally."

During certain riots that took place in 1765 the

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mob had attacked the Duke of Bedford's house, and his Grace was much irritated at Sir John's irresolute conduct, as he considered it, in the business. This led to a quarrel or coolness between them. A few years later the Duke gracefully made the *amende* by extending the lease of Sir John's house, which drew forth this grateful acknowledgment:—

"*March*, 1770.

"Sir John Fielding presents his compliments to his Grace the Duke of Bedford, and takes the earliest opportunity to acquaint his Grace that he was this day honoured with his generous gift of the additional ten years to the lease of his house in Bow Street, and for which he returns his warmest acknowledgment, and assures him that the satisfaction he receives on this occasion is infinitely superior to the value of the present, for he has long had the mortification to know that he has been represented in a false light to his Grace; and a very terrible mortification it was, as he is conscious that it was impossible for any man to be more sensible of a favour conferred on his family than he was of that princely instance of generosity which his Grace showed to his late brother, Henry Fielding, or to be more attached from principles of gratitude and respect to your Grace's honour, welfare, and interest than I ever have been, notwithstanding it has been my misfortune to be misrepresented, until my behaviour was subjected to the observations of my im-

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partial friend Mr. Palmer, to whom I shall ever esteem myself highly indebted, should he be the happy means of convincing your Grace, from his experience of my conduct, how respectfully, gratefully, and effectively I have, on all occasions, endeavoured to acquit myself towards his Grace, to whom I have a real pleasure in being obliged, and am, with unfeigned truth, &c."

This worthy magistrate was "worthy" in a better sense than the one in which the hackneyed newspaper term is usually applied. He took on himself the care of his brother's children and brought them up. One of them, Mr. William Fielding, was trained in his office, and later became a magistrate himself. It must have been curious, so recently as 1822, to have heard him give evidence before a committee of the House of Commons, and speak of his father the author of "Tom Jones." In his evidence there is a certain prosiness, with an occasional touch of the family style. It is curious to think of three of the family thus holding the same office.

"I remember," he said, "the 'Apollo Gardens,' the 'Dog and Duck,' and the 'Temple of Flora,' and a dreadful society of vagabonds were certainly collected together in those places. In that time of day the character of highwaymen on horseback was a more frequent character than it has been of late years. I think the horse-patrole of the Office at Bow Street has been of a very considerable degree of service in putting

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down that class of depredators; the character of the highwaymen is certainly less heard of since the putting down of *those two infernal places of meeting*, the 'Dog and Duck,' and the 'Temple of Flora,' which were certainly the most dreadful places in or about the metropolis; they were the resorts of women, not only of the lowest species, but even of the middle classes; they were the resorts, as well of apprentices as of every sort of dissolute, profligate, and abandoned young men."

As we have said, during the long period Sir John held office, nothing is so conspicuous as the evidences of his activity. He is one of the figures of his time. Is there a highway robbery, or murder, or riot, we invariably hear of the indefatigable Sir John Fielding being personally on the scene, despatching his emissaries to arrest or search. Is there an arrest, he is promptly "brought before Sir John Fielding" and examined. There was a daring robbery at Lord Harrington's, when jewellery, snuff-boxes, watches, money, to the amount of nearly 3000*l.* were carried off. "Sir John Fielding," we are told, "is all day in the house and a good part of the night. The servants have all been examined over and over again." Sometimes he showed himself in an amiable, patient light.

In 1769 a young shoemaker named Griffiths had become attached to a girl in service; they were called in church, but the girl, who had lost her place, and had

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pawned all her clothes, positively refused to be married in her rags. In despair the shoemaker purchased a pistol, and, accusing himself of having committed a crime, gave himself up. Brought before Sir John, the deception was soon discovered. But the magistrate, finding that he bore a good character, interested himself in the case. The girl, hearing of her lover's trouble, fell into fits. The goodnatured magistrate appointed a day for both to come before him, when he would see what could be done towards getting them married, which he arranged, and a young nobleman who was present gave five guineas to buy clothes.

Sir John figures largely in the calendar of Home Office papers. Thus we find Lord Halifax directing the Postmaster-General to send all letters of one Trench and one Swift to Sir John "for his perusal." In 1765 he received a letter from Mr. Conway, the secretary, to wear a badge and ribbon, which we accordingly find displayed conspicuously in all his portraits. In these records he is shown, as usual, on the *qui-vive* for everything, indicating his suspicions to the court, warning, &c. It is strange to find that he was one of the Poor Knights of Windsor in 1772.

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CHAPTER III.

CASES BEFORE SIR JOHN.

THE episodes of serious and dramatic interest which Sir J. Fielding took part in unravelling, comprised some of an exciting kind, and indeed were some of the most important in the last half of the century. A few of these, of which certain graphic descriptions have been left, one might be almost certain were described by his own pen. There is one account which has much of the style and pathos of his brother, and indeed is given in so competent and effective a style as to be worthy of the great writer. It is thus lifted above the ordinary "reporter's" vernacular, which so often vulgarizes some natural and touching episode. This particular one reads like some paper in the *Tatler*. There can be little doubt that the narrative is Sir John's own.

§ *The Story of Sarah Metyard and her apprentice Ann Naylor.*

"In the year 1758," he tells us, "Sarah Metyard, the mother, kept a little haberdasher's shop in Bruton

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Street, Hanover Square, and her daughter, then about nineteen years old, lived with her. Their chief business was the making of silk nets, purses, and mittens, and they took parish children apprentices. They had then five: Philadelphia Dowley, about ten years old; Sarah Henderson, about twelve; Ann Naylor, about thirteen; Mary her sister, about eight, and some others." They were kept at work in a stifling room from morning until night, and allowed out but once a fortnight, while the dreadful Metyard, who hated them all as parish children are hated, seemed to grind the very life out of them. Ann Naylor had a whitlow upon her finger so bad it was obliged to be cut off, and being besides a weak, sickly child, became particularly obnoxious to the inhumanity and avarice of the petty tyrant of whom she was condemned to be the slave.

"The unfortunate child, not able to endure this tyranny, attempted to run away, but was brought back. The street-door was then kept locked, and she was kept 'short of food.' Her strength beginning to fail, she made another attempt to escape. She took advantage of the milkman coming to slip out and run away; but the daughter missing her while she was yet in sight, called out to have her stopped, and the milkman, as she was running with what strength she possessed, caught her in his arms. The poor child expostulated with the man, and pressed him with a

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moving earnestness to let her go: '*Pray, milkman,*' says she, '*let me go, for I have had no victuals a long time, and if I stay here I shall be starved to death.*'

"The daughter dragged her into the house by the neck, slapped to the door, and forced her upstairs into the room where the old woman was still in bed, though she had started up and joined in the cry upon the first alarm. Here she was thrown upon the bed, and the old woman held her down by the head while her daughter beat her with the handle of a hearth-broom; after this she was forced into a two-pair-of-stairs back room, and a string tied round her waist, she was made fast to the door, with her hands bound behind her so that she could neither lie nor sit down. In this manner was she kept standing without food or drink for three days, being untied only at night that she might go to bed, and the last night she was so feeble that she was obliged to crawl up to bed upon her hands and knees.

"The first day she said little, her strength failing her apace; the next day she said nothing, but the pains of death coming on she groaned piteously; on the third day, soon after she was tied up, her strength wholly failed her and she sank down, hanging double in the string which bound her by the waist. The children being frightened ran to the top of the stairs and called out, '*Miss Sally! Miss Sally! Nancy does not move.*' But she was so far from being touched with pity that she cried out, '*If she does not move, I warrant I'll*

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make her move; and immediately the daughter came upstairs and found her without any appearance of sense or motion, hanging by the string, her head and feet together."

How simple, natural, and pathetic is this description!

Finding, however, notwithstanding her blows, which were very hard, that the poor wretch showed no signs of sensibility, fear took to alarm, and she hastily called up her mother. When the old woman came up she sat upon the garret stairs at the door where the child was still hanging, and the string being at length cut, she laid her across her lap and sent Sally Henderson downstairs for some drops. This vile pair then hid the body upstairs, locking the door, and pretended that the child had a fit, from which she had recovered, giving out that she had made another attempt and had escaped from the garret. To support this the hall-door was left open and a sort of craftily acted scene was arranged of affected astonishment at the child's escape.

The old woman and her daughter, however, did not know how to dispose of her body, and they actually kept it in the garret for two months, until the atmosphere became intolerable. The pair then cut it up into pieces, and burnt one of the hands, "cursing the unhappy creature because her bones were so long consuming." They then carried out two bundles of the remains "to the great gullyhole in Chick Lane, where is the common sewer which flows into the Thames." They tried to

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throw these pieces over the wall where the sewer is "open," but failing, "threw them down in the mud and water before the grate and returned home." There they were found by a constable and were buried, it being assumed that they were remains from a dissecting-room.

"The mother and daughter," the narrative goes on, "had always lived upon very bad terms, and though the daughter was between nineteen and twenty, her mother used frequently to beat her. The daughter, hoping to terrify her into better behaviour, would, when thus provoked, threaten to accuse her of the murder, and make herself an evidence to prove it. This rendered their animosities more bitter. Sometimes she urged her mother to let her go to service, and sometimes declared she would drown herself. Thus they continued to hate, to reproach, and to torment each other until two years after the child had been dead," when one Mr. Rooker, who had been a dealer in tea, took a lodging in the house.

Mr. Rooker pitied the condition of the girl, and when he removed to another residence, took her into his service, to the fury of the demon mother, who, with a strange infatuation, pursued her from place to place, causing disturbances before the door. "When orders were given to refuse her admittance she cursed in front of the house. Once she got in and attacked her daughter, when it is probable that she would have

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been killed if assistance had not been at hand, for she was once found forced up into a corner by the mother, who, having torn off her cap and handkerchief, and greatly bruised and scratched her face, had laid hold of a pointed knife, which she was aiming at her breast. This continued until the 9th of June last, and it had been observed that in the height of their quarrels many doubtful and mysterious expressions were used that intimated that some secret of importance was between them." The mother used to call Rooker "the old Perfumer Teadog," and the daughter would reply, "*Mother, remember you are the Perfumer*," alluding to her having kept the child's body in a box till it could not be endured. At other times the daughter, when provoked, would say, "*You are the Chick Lane ghost. Remember the gully in Chick Lane!*" Suspicion being thus roused, the matter was put into Sir John's hands. He made diligent inquiry into the case, which led to the arrest of the two women, and their trial. The daughter accused the mother of the murder, though the mother did not accuse the daughter. They were found guilty and sentenced to death. "But even after this there continued so bitter an animosity between them that it was necessary to confine them apart."

"They were both overwhelmed with a sense of their condition, and about six o'clock in the evening before the execution, the mother, who had neither eaten nor drunk for some time, fell into convulsions, and con-

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tinued speechless and insensible till death. The daughter, though she was present when this happened, *took no notice of it*, but continued her conversation with a friend who was come to take leave of her."

All the touches in this striking narrative show an artistic sense both of reserve and selection. There is a power in the phraseology and a dramatic instinct that is remarkable, and recalls the style of Henry Fielding himself. For this was after all but a "police case," where an old woman had ill-used her apprentice to death, but the incidents of horror are so adjusted and deepened that it rises to the dignity of tragedy.

§ *The Fate of Miss Ray, the Singer.*

One morning in April, 1779, towards five o'clock, Sir John Fielding came over to the "Shakespeare Tavern" to examine the condition of a man who had been carried there about midnight the night before, in a desperate condition, as it was thought. He had discharged a pistol at a lady as she was coming out of Covent Garden Theatre, and had unhappily killed her. He had then attempted to blow his brains out with another pistol, but not so successfully as in the case of his victim. He had been carried over to the "Shakespeare," and had been allowed to remain there on account of his state. The magistrate, finding the wounds not dangerous, sent him to Tothill Fields prison. This is the well-known extraordinary, if not

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romantic, case of Hackman, who had murdered Miss Ray, of whom he was jealous. The unfortunate lady was a public singer, and her relations with Lord Sandwich were but too notorious. She had been to the theatre with her friend, Madame Galli, wife of her singing-master, and was walking under the Piazza to her carriage, attended by a Mr. Macnamara, when a man touched her on the shoulder. She turned round, when he fired a pistol at her head, and she sank down a corpse. He then fired another pistol at his own head, but the ball grazed the part, inflicting only a slight wound. He was seen frantically beating his skull with the butt-end of the weapon. When he had somewhat recovered he inquired about his victim, and being told that she was dead, desired that "her poor remains should not be exposed to the gaze of the curious." This absurd solicitude in a murderer is truly singular.

Lord Sandwich was a great musical amateur, and used to give performances at his house, generally of a sacred cast, in which the lady took the leading part. She particularly excelled in rendering the ballad of "Auld Robin Grey," which she gave with much feeling. His lordship contented himself with a modest share in the orchestra—performing on the kettle-drums. We are told by invited visitors of the scrupulousness with which the host watched that his *cantatrice* should not in any way shock the delicate

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instincts of the company. She kept herself retired and spoke to no one. Once, indeed, a lady indiscreetly went up to her to compliment her on her singing of a sacred melody, but Lord Sandwich called a friend of hers, Mr. Cradock, aside, begging of him to speak to the lady and warn her against such behaviour; for, as he sagaciously observed, "once this sort of thing got in, we should have to give up our pleasant musical meetings." The kettle-drum would be silent. This went on for many years.

Miss Ray's portrait has been engraved, and presents rather an ordinary "common" face. Mr. Cradock, who has written some entertaining recollections, was on friendly terms with her, and she was encouraged, shortly before the unfortunate casualty, to open herself to him on a delicate matter—her "precarious" position in reference to his lordship—hinting that he might suggest what was called "a settlement." The gentleman, however, for obvious reasons, declined to interfere.

An officer in the 68th Regiment, named Hackman, had come to the neighbourhood of Huntingdon to recruit. While there he was invited out to Hitchinbrook and entertained by Lord Sandwich. He conceived a sort of insane passion for Miss Ray, who was about double his age. He was the son of a respectable tradesman in Cheapside, while the lady had been apprenticed to a Mrs. Fores, then a fashionable milliner. He was a young man of good address, "of

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a very pleasing figure and most engaging behaviour." He soon proposed marriage, but the lady told him plainly "she did not wish to carry a knapsack." In despair at being thus dismissed, he left the army, and, obtaining a living in Norfolk, took orders, hoping, no doubt, thus to secure a better provision. As he was still rejected, he determined on this act of violence. The morning, which was April 7th, he spent reading "Blair's Sermons," and dined with his sisters. He then wrote letters of the usual farewell kind, and lingered in one of the coffee-houses in Covent Garden till the play was over.

That old reprobate, Lord Sandwich, was deeply shocked at the event, and, it was said, did not recover it for years. He was once induced to go to a musical party, when a lady of good voice was asked to sing, which, it was reckoned, would have a soothing effect. The singer selected a song that was then popular, and, with admirable tact and *apropos*, "struck up," "*Shepherds, I have lost my love, Have you seen my body?*" Not unnaturally, the nobleman was seen to grow uncomfortable, and presently rising took leave of his hostess.

This catastrophe made a sensation, and moreover became oddly associated with other persons and incidents. Thus it engendered a violent altercation between Johnson and one of his friends, "which, having made much noise at the time, I think it proper, in order to

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prevent any future misrepresentation, to give a minute account of it." Thus Mr. Boswell tells us :—

"In talking of Hackman, Johnson argued, as Judge Blackstone had done, that his being furnished with two pistols was a proof that he meant to shoot two persons. Mr. Beauclerk said, 'No; for that every wise man who intended to shoot himself, took two pistols, that he might be sure of doing it at once. Lord ——'s cook shot himself with one pistol, and lived ten days in great agony. Mr. ——, who loved buttered muffins, but durst not eat them, because they disagreed with his stomach, resolved to shoot himself; and then he eat three buttered muffins for breakfast, before shooting himself, knowing that he should not be troubled with indigestion; *he* had two charged pistols; one was found lying charged upon the table by him, after he had shot himself with the other.'— 'Well (said Johnson, with an air of triumph), you see here one pistol was sufficient.' Beauclerk replied smartly, "Because it happened to kill him." And either then, or a very little afterwards, being piqued at Johnson's triumphant remark, added, 'This is what you don't know, and I do.' There was then a cessation of the dispute; and some minutes intervened, during which dinner and the glass went on cheerfully; when Johnson suddenly and abruptly exclaimed, 'Mr. Beauclerk, how came you to talk so petulantly to me, as, "This is what you don't know, but what I know?"

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One thing *I* know, which *you* don't seem to know, that you are very uncivil.' Beauclerk: 'Because *you* began by being uncivil (which you always are).' The words in parentheses were, I believe, not heard by Dr. Johnson. Here again there was a cessation of arms. A little while after this the conversation turned on the violence of Hackman's temper. Johnson then said, 'It was his business to *command* his temper, as my friend, Mr. Beauclerk, should have done some time ago.' Beauclerk: 'I should learn of *you*, sir.' Johnson: 'Sir, you have given *me* opportunities enough of learning when I have been in *your* company. No man loves to be treated with contempt.' Beauclerk (with a polite inclination towards Johnson): 'Sir, you have known me twenty years, and however I may have treated others, you may be sure I could never treat you with contempt.' Johnson: 'Sir, you have said more than was necessary.' Thus it ended."

More curious, however, was what happened to a friend of the eccentric artist Barry, who used often to relate the story. On the ill-omened night in question, he was crossing from Islington, to call upon a brother artist in Spa Fields towards the dusk, when he saw a young woman throw herself into the New River, near Sadler's Wells. He immediately ran to the spot, and plunged in, when she seized him in the struggle of death; and it was not only with difficulty that he

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saved her, but himself, from drowning. Indeed, he was so exhausted, that he was pulled out by some persons brought to his assistance by his shouting for help.

From thence he went to his friend in Paradise Row, borrowed a change of dress, and procuring a hackney coach, desired to be driven home, when, proceeding up Gray's Inn Lane, the vehicle was stopped by a gang of footpads, who robbed him of his watch and money.

"Arriving at his house about ten o'clock, he took off his borrowed attire, and re-dressing, sent for another hack, and desired to be driven to the "Shakespeare," in the Piazza, Covent Garden, where he had engaged to sup with a party who were to meet there after the play. As his coach was drawing up at the corner of Russell Street, a gentleman's carriage whipped furiously in—for the play was just over—and upset him, when he cut his hands and face with the glass. "The devil!—what next?" he exclaimed, as he paid the driver, who "hoped his honour was not seriously hurt." "No," said he, "I am only scratched;" and making his way, his face streaming with blood, at a quick pace, towards the coffee-house, to procure surgical aid, he had only advanced a few yards, when a pistol was exploded close to his ear, and a lady fell at his feet. He stood aghast, when instantly another was fired by a young man at his own devoted head.

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Scared out of his wits at such a succession of strange disasters, he flew to the house of a friend in King Street, and for some minutes was so overcome with amazement that he could not collect himself sufficiently to relate to the astonished family the tragic accidents which had driven him thither."

A strange book appeared, called "Love and Madness," written or compiled by Sir Herbert Croft, and which had a large sale. In this it is difficult to distinguish the genuine from the imaginary portion, and it was said that the author had come into possession of some of the unfortunate man's letters and papers.

A well-known figure in the last generation was Mr. Basil Montagu, who was the son of the murdered singer, and whose daughter is the accomplished and lamented poetess, Adelaide Proctor.

Hackman was tried at the next Old Bailey Sessions, and of course was found guilty. He made a studied speech, *ad misericordiam*, declaring himself to be "the most wretched of human beings;" but that he had conceived his murderous plan "only in a moment of phrenzy." At the execution the intrusive Boswell was present, actually obtaining a seat in the mourning coach, beside the prisoner, and a good place on the scaffold!

§ *A second Jonathan Wild.*

The line of villainy taken by Wild had at least the merit of originality, and was celebrated with

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happy sarcasm, and an analysis of the roguish mind and motives that is even happier. It is strange to find that not many years after Mr. Wild's public death, a successful copyist of his method arose, who pursued his career unchecked for some years. This gentleman was one James Bolland, and his system was exactly modelled on that of Wild's, viz., to employ the law as an aid to his own particular villainies. He was the son of a Whitechapel butcher, and had opened an establishment on his own account. But being much thrown with bailiffs, thief-takers, &c., their trade seemed to have a greater fascination for him than his own, and he speedily determined to adopt it. An awkward discovery of his practice in business probably contributed to his change of profession. He supplied the old St. Thomas's Hospital with meat, and to increase his profits adopted a 56 lb. weight, which, though in appearance like its iron fellows, was made of *wood*, and weighed but 7 lbs. This happy and original idea would have done credit to Mr. Wild. "His journeyman," we are told, and again I fancy by Sir John, from the Fielding-like touches, "observing this and similar deceptions, thought he might retaliate on his master by defrauding him of his cash." So, by a happy compensation, the profits brought in by the wooden 7 lbs. weight were subtracted in another shape. At this stage of our hero's career, it is remarked incidentally that, "owing to his ill-

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usage, his wife fell a victim to grief and despair." Mr. Bolland next succeeded in becoming a sheriff's officer, and set up "a spunging house" near St. George's, Southwark. Here he found large and varied opportunities for his ingenuity. He had a peculiar art, or gift, of griping and entangling the miserable class of debtors who fell under his control. He squeezed them dry, as it were, and yet contrived that it should be more or less their own act. "He had at his nod a number of watchmen, who, being his prisoners and out upon parole, were compelled to do all his dirty work in negotiating bills and bailing at command. This practice," it was quaintly added, "soon brought many of them to a prison, where they are now lodged, probably for life." Others were despatched into various parts of the country, to execute orders upon the credit of those in town. Young fellows of a comely aspect, who fell into his clutches, obtained a temporary liberty in order to defraud tradesmen, and, by increasing his stock of furniture and plate, they increased their debts to such a pitch that they became incapable ever after to extricate themselves.

When no more was to be got, they were instantly despatched to the prison. With this trade he united that of a horse-dealer, bill-discounter, and indeed any nominal calling that would help him to plunder. At a fair at Oxford he wished to purchase a horse from

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a farmer, but would not agree as to the price. Going to the inn where the horse was stabled, he told the landlord he had bought it, and rode it up to London. The farmer followed, and applied at the police-office, on which Sir John issued his warrant, and sent the thief to Tothill Fields Prison. The crafty fellow, however, speedily invited the farmer to see him, and "over a cheerful glass" speedily came to an arrangement, and obtained his release.

A pleasant instance of his villainy was furnished by his treatment of a young Irish gentleman, who, having "run through" his property in town, found himself under Mr. Bolland's care. The latter, assuming an air of good-natured *bonhomie*, declared it was a pity and a shame to see a fine young fellow deprived of his liberty for a trifle, and suggested that if he had any friend on whom he could draw for a sum of money he would take it, and let him go. The young man accordingly "drew" on some of his friends in Ireland for 30*l*.—about double the debt—and Mr. Bolland gave his note for the difference. He then set the prisoner free, but a few days later invited him and his friend to supper, when he told him that his note had come back unpaid.

However, the glass went round cheerfully, and when the guests proposed going Mr. Bolland very amicably acquainted them that he had writs against them both, and they were compelled to remain his involuntary guests

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for the night. Next day the pair, seeing it was useless to contend with him, procured the money; but they reminded him that he had a note of theirs for 13*l*. "What note, sir? I never gave you one." "There it is, sir, in your own writing." "Aye! aye! let us see it." They eagerly presented it; he tore it in pieces, still persisting it was all a mistake.

More cruel was his treatment of a sea-captain's wife, whose furniture, in her absence, he seized on. She was so affected that in her agitation she set the house on fire. The captain had paid the debt. She was tried, convicted, and respited, "upon the face of the affair appearing so uncommonly aggravating." Soon after the husband came home from sea, and in order to distress him and prevent his commencing an action Mr. Bolland contrived to have him arrested for a considerable sum. "We need not be surprised," runs the chronicle, "at Mr. Bolland's perseverance in these knavish pursuits, as he did not even lay claim to any probity, for whenever his integrity was called in question by any of his employers, he would reply with great coolness, 'Look you, sir! You know I do not pretend to be honest, but try. I'll never tell you a lie!' Another sentiment of this extraordinary man should not be omitted, as it carries with it an appearance of being prophetic. Whenever he was asked for a toast in company, the first he gave always was, 'May hemp bind those whom honour won't,' which is quite in Mr.

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Wild's own manner, and uncommonly like the Fielding style.

When the office of City Marshal was vacant, this worthy man offered himself as a candidate. After a spirited bidding—for it was purchaseable—he was declared the highest bidder, and gleefully deposited his deposit—a sum of 2400*l.*—scraped together by a most hideous course of villainies. But this was found rather *trop fort*, and he was told that it was impossible to appoint a person of his description. He threatened an action, but wisely forebore proceedings against the Corporation of London, and proceeded reluctantly to withdraw his deposit. But here a happy stroke of retribution overtook him. Certain creditors whom he had defrauded had got wind of the matter, and obtained an order impounding the deposit. At the same time he was overtaken by justice, and for a very trifling peccadillo —at least compared with his previous enormities—lost his life. Raising money on a bill, he put a fictitious endorsement on it at the request of the discounter, "J. Banks;" was tried, found guilty, and hung, to the great satisfaction of the community and of his many victims.

§ *The Perreaus.*

On a Saturday evening on the 11th March, 1775, Mr. Addington, the Bow Street magistrate, was asked by a respectable man to hear his complaint against a

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woman, who, he said, had given him a forged bond for 7500*l.* The woman denied this ; and the pair recriminated and upbraided one another. From which the shrewd magistrate argued that both had a share in the offence, if offence there was, and sent them both off to prison to wait further inquiries. The man was an eminent apothecary or medical practitioner living in Golden Square, Robert Perreau by name ; the woman a notorious Mrs. Rudd. Robert's brother Daniel came to see him in his trouble, but found himself detained in the prison, under suspicion of being engaged in the business. It came out that in the January previous Robert Perreau had gone to Drummonds, the bankers, where he was known, to borrow 1500*l.* for ten days, which he obtained on the security of the lease of a house in Harley Street. The ten days, however, stretched out to two months, when he again appeared with a proposal to borrow no less a sum than 7500*l.* on a bond of a well-known gentleman, Mr. William Adair, and out of which the Drummonds were to be repaid the original loan. When the bond was examined, Mr. Drummond expressed some doubts as to the signature. One of the partners coming in, also doubted. He was directed to call next day, and in the interval consulted friends of Adair, who assured him that it was not his writing. An intimate friend named Dr. Brooke had been victimized to the amount of 1500*l.*, lent on a forged bond for 3100*l.* The trial of the

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two brothers which followed excited extraordinary interest. It was firmly believed they were the innocent victims of this scheming, artful demirep, Mrs. Margaret Rudd, who had contrived to make them believe that these deeds were genuine. This theory was ridiculous. Such credulousness does not affect persons in sore straits and difficulties, who from experience find how difficult it is to procure money; especially as they knew the character of their female associate.

This woman, who was good-looking, clever, and interesting, became a heroine. When Perreau came again, the banker told him he was afraid he had been imposed upon, and suggested that they should go to Mr. Adair himself and ask him, was it his signature? That gentleman at once declared it to be a forgery, on which Mr. Perreau smiled incredulously. The bond was detained, and Perreau was followed, when he was observed to join his brother and Mrs. Rudd. When it was seen that the trio were gathering all their valuables and had got into a coach, evidently to make their escape, suspicion became certainty. The party were arrested, brought before Sir John at Bow Street, where the examination took place. Other charges were then made, it being found that sums of 4000*l.* and 5000*l.* had been raised on similar forged deeds. What was more heartless, and not the least skilful of Mrs. Rudd's proceedings was the adroit fashion

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in which she contrived to extricate herself by taking advantage of the critical situation of the brothers. She lived with Daniel Perreau, and had three children. She now came forward and offered herself as evidence for the crown. Strange to say, by this disagreeable spectacle of treachery there was no disgust aroused: everybody crowded to see the interesting "King's evidence," who declared that "she was the daughter of a nobleman in Scotland, had married an officer, that she had a reserve of jewels and 13,000*l.*, all of which she gave to Perreau, whom she had always loved tenderly, though latterly he had grown peevish, uneasy, and much altered to her. He had cruelly constrained her to sign the bond in question by holding a knife to her throat, swearing he would murder her if she did not comply; that, being struck with remorse, she had informed Mr. Adair of the whole." Mr. Drummond, however, described an interview with her in which she took the whole forgery on herself, and, on his doubting that she could be skilful enough, she took up a paper and wrote Mr. Adair's signature, exactly like the one which appeared on the bond. The defence was ingenious; that the woman had always acted as intermediary and carried on her operations without allowing Perreau to see Adair. It should be mentioned that the business was further complicated by the fact of the two brothers being twins, so like as to be scarcely distinguishable. Another incident of the case was the

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number of persons of rank who deposed to the character of Daniel Perreau—Sir John Moore, General Rebow, Lady Lumsden, who declared "she would as soon have thought of committing a forgery herself as of supposing that Mr. Perreau was capable of such a thing." Both brothers were found guilty and sentenced to be hung. Immense exertions were made to save them. No less than seventy-eight leading bankers and merchants petitioned the king. Paragraphs filled the newspapers, all to the one tune that the brothers "were the dupes of a designing woman." Their extraordinary fraternal affection—often found in the case of twins—excited universal sympathy. Yet it is impossible to read the evidence without feeling convinced that as men of business they must have at least known that such sums could not have passed lawfully or without connivance and co-operation on their part.

While their fate was in suspense, it was determined to put Mrs. Rudd herself on trial, for it seems that at the time, the law was not settled as to the immunity granted to "approvers." Here was another entertainment for the public, who were immensely excited by the charms and demeanour of this lady. The interest was developed to a tragic degree when it was known that the unfortunate wife, Mrs. Robert Perreau was to appear and be examined, so as to do something to neutralize the woman's evidence and try and save one so dear. The responsibility of such a situation was

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almost awful. Mr. Angelo was present and thus reports the dramatic scene :—

"Mrs. Rudd's counsellors," he says, "were said to have managed her defence with uncommon exertion and skill. On the day of her trial, the court was crowded to excess. Being there early by favour of Mr. Reynolds, the clerk of the arraigns, I obtained a station near her, at the bar. She was in person of the middle size, with small but beautiful features, and very fair. She looked pale, and appeared much affected. Such was her address, that no one could have discovered in her manner the least consciousness of that deep-designing wickedness, which had wrought the ruin of these unhappy brothers, and destroyed the peace of a once happy and virtuous family.

"During her trial, Mrs. Perreau was placed in the evidence box, to endeavour by circumstances which she knew, to exculpate her husband, and to inculpate the wicked woman at the bar, the seductress of her husband and his brother, then tried and convicted prisoners in Newgate; but, being cross-examined by Counsellor Davy, and, as it was thought, with too little delicacy towards the feelings of a lady in her pitiable condition, she was so entirely overwhelmed that she burst into an agony of tears, and was carried out of court in a state of insensibility. As the jury returned, the prisoner fixed her fascinating eyes upon the jury-box, when the conduct of the foreman, a well-known gay

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auctioneer, did not escape observation; for by a smile, which he significantly glanced towards her, many anticipated the verdict. She was acquitted."[1]

[1] **A grotesque farcical incident is associated with these tragic events.**

"Among others," Angelo tells us, "who exerted themselves for the doctor, was the late Thomas Tomkins, of Sermon Lane, the most celebrated penman that this or any other country had produced. Richard Wilson, the landscape painter, Henderson, the comedian, with some others, constant evening cronies at the "Shakspeare," were discussing the question of the King's prerogative some weeks before Dr. Dodd's execution, in the coffee-room there. Tomkins was at the moment exhibiting a large sheet of vellum, on which the head to Dr. Dodd's petition was written, in Roman capitals, round-hand, italics, German-text, and all the varieties of which his pen was so prolific; and so wrapt was the good man, with the importance of his handy-work, that he insisted, with the addition of a tasteful allegorical design of Cipriani's or Mortimer's, of Mercy and Justice, with their respective attributes, placed around this superlative specimen of his art, it could not fail to move the Sovereign. Wilson, though at this time as gloomy, from his own misfortunes, as man could well be, was so involuntarily and suddenly wrought upon by this extravagant self-complaisance of the penman, that he roared with laughter. 'To think of moving the King and his council by a pen and a picture!—Ha!—ha!—ha!' In this cynical mood, he appealed to every one who entered the tavern, all of whom caught his fit of risibility, so as to render the scene truly of the tragic-comic character. Tomkins, however, highly offended at this insult to his self-importance, hastily rolled up the parchment and took himself off. Tomkins, who had never seen Dr. Dodd, on hearing of the vast exertions that were making to obtain subscribers' names to the petition, went to Newgate and introducing himself to the prisoner, offered to write the prologue to the lists to be laid at the feet of the King, which lists were written on several score yards of parchment, and joined together. This offer was gratefully accepted by the doctor, and the penman, as is said,

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Mrs. Rudd had a particular admirer in the person of Mr. James Boswell, who got introduced to her, attracted, he told his friend Johnson, by her address and irresistible powers of fascination. The Sage himself went so far as to declare that he envied his friend this privilege, and added that he also would have sought her acquaintance only for the fear of its getting into the newspapers. The sly Boswell altogether concealed from his friend the extent to which he followed up his introduction.

The first victims to the law, making forgery a capital offence, were these unhappy brothers. "Had the crime of the Perreaus been anything less than forgery, they might have escaped; but the stern and inflexible counsels of Lord Chancellor Thurlow stopped the current of compassion in the breasts of the Privy Council; and the Sovereign, notwithstanding the mildness of his nature, was prevailed upon to let the law take its course."

The assumed necessity for this severity was opposed to the extraordinary exertions made for the sparing of Dr. Dodd. Hence, the execution of the Perreaus was held to be so irrevocable a precedent, that there was no possibility of departing from it, Lord Thurlow having said, with his accustomed force, "If Dr. Dodd

inspired by the importance of the subject, produced, on a large sheet of vellum, the most elegant specimen of caligraphy that ever was seen."

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be saved, the Perreaus have been murdered." There was also another forgery case, that of William Wynne Ryland, the celebrated engraver; and it cannot escape observation that these memorable forgeries succeeded each other so nearly. The Perreaus suffered in 1776; Dr. Dodd, in 1777; and William Wynne Ryland in 1783.

In spite of all efforts, the brothers were ordered for execution. Angelo, before quoted, who took interest in all existing events in the town, has given a curious and interesting account of the unwholesome excitement that attended such "hanging days," and which contrasts with the complete exclusion, in our own times, of the public from such horrors.

"Generally, an execution day at Tyburn was considered by various classes as a public holiday. The malefactors, being exposed thus publicly through the main street for three miles, it was supposed, would tend to morality by deterring many who were witnesses of the agony of the miserable culprits, from the perpetration of those vices which had brought them to their pitiable fate. This, however, was at length discovered to be a mistaken policy, for these cruel spectacles drew thousands from their lawful occupations, and emptied the manufactories and workshops."

The amusing though garrulous fencing-master, goes on: "At an early hour on the morning of an execution, thousands of mechanics and others who had

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on the previous night agreed upon the making a '*day of it*,' met at their proposed stations. It was common throughout the whole metropolis for master coach-makers, framemakers, tailors, shoemakers, and others who had engaged to complete orders within a given time, to bear in mind to observe to their customers, 'that will be a hanging-day, and my men will not be at work.' There were also various grades of amateurs of these sights, both high and low, whose ardour in the pursuit excited them to know and to see the whole appertaining to the scene from the first examination of the prisoner at Sir John Fielding's office in Bow Street, to his exit at 'fatal Tyburn tree.' Foote, speaking of some prominent characters of this class, designated them, 'The Hanging Committee.' Mr. George Selwyn and another wit, the famed Duke of Montague, were two distinguished members of this coterie; and a much respected nobleman, who frequented my father's *manége*, to gratify this *penchant* was said to have attended at the Tower in the capacity of a barber to perform the operation of shaving one of the Scottish rebel lords during their confinement, a few days previous to their being beheaded on Tower Hill.

"Another nobleman, a great patron of the arts, was present, by favour, at most of the private examinations in Bow Street, in the memorable days of old Sir John Fielding, and frequently went to Newgate in disguise

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to see extraordinary characters whilst under sentence of death. Thomas Warton, the poet, was one of the most ardent amateurs of these spectacles. When he was absent from Trinity, and inquiries were made as for what part of the world he had suddenly departed, those who knew his propensity would refer the inquirer to the public accounts of the progress of the judges. An execution took place after the Oxford assizes, of a man for sheep-stealing, whilst the poet was absent. On his return to College, one of the Fellows told him of the event with exultation, and reminded him of the loss of so interesting a sight. 'I knew of it,' replied Warton, 'but I have been into a neighbouring county where a man was hanged for murder!'

"Those of the lower grade who were most eager for these sights, early in the morning surrounded the felons' gate at Newgate to see the malefactors brought forth, and who received nosegays at St. Sepulchre's. Others appeared at various stations and fell into the ranks according to convenience; hence, the crowd accumulating on the cavalcade reaching St. Giles, the throng was occasionally so great as to entirely fill Oxford Street from house to house on both sides of the way when the pressure became tremendous within half a mile of Tyburn. The Old Bailey, Newgate Street, from St. Sepulchre's Church, Snow Hill, and Holborn, as high as Furnival's Inn, on some of these occasions, were filled with one dense mass of spectators.

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" Nothing can be conceived more impressing than the solemn manner in which the unhappy criminals were received by the multitude. At the execution of Dr. Dodd, my station, with a late distinguished member of Parliament, and a celebrated author, was at a window of the late Mr. Langdale's, the distiller. The unfortunate malefactor was permitted to go in a mourning coach. His corpse-like appearance produced an awful picture of human woe. Tens of thousands of hats, which formed a black mass, as the coach advanced, were taken off simultaneously, and so many tragic faces, exhibited a spectacle, the effect of which is beyond the power of words to describe. Thus the procession travelled onwards, through the multitude, whose silence added to the awfulness of the scene. The two Perreaus, Dr. Dodd, and Ryland, in consequence of their previous respectability, were indulged with mourning coaches, in which they proceeded from Newgate to Tyburn. A hearse, containing the coffin, to receive the body of the malefactor, also formed part of the procession. The Reverend Mr. Hackman was also permitted to go to the same place of execution in a mourning coach.

" Ryland I knew from my boyhood; he and Gwynn, the painter, were frequently at Carlisle House. My father, who went to offer his condolence to Mrs. Ryland, used to declare, that the scene presented by her and her children on this occasion was so pathetic

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that he could not sleep for several nights; until his imagination became so entirely possessed with the wretched group, that he feared to retire to his bed.

"Poor Ryland! After his condemnation he petitioned for a respite, which was not only granted for the time required, but renewed. The circumstance which urged him to this, excited universal sympathy. He made this request to enable him to finish a very fine engraving which he had begun, the last of a series, from the paintings of Angelica Kauffman, and I believe the subject was Queen Eleanor sucking the poison from the arm of her royal consort, King Edward the First. However that may be, he was indulged with the permission, as he alleged that his object was not to prolong his wretched existence, but to enable his wife, after his decease, by this addition to his stock of plates, to add to her support, and that of his fatherless children. It is said that he laboured incessantly at this his last work, and that when he received from his printer, *Haddril*, who was the first in his line, the finished proof impression, he calmly said, 'Mr. Haddril, I thank you, my task is now accomplished;' and resigning himself to his fate was executed within a week from that day.

"Ryland was a man of extraordinary self-command. I recollect, immediately after the discovery of the forgery, large placards being posted all over the town, offering a sum of five hundred pounds for his apprehension. He first secreted himself, as was believed, in the

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Minories, and though he was cautioned by his friends to remain in his hiding-place, yet, after a few days' confinement, he could not resist his desire to take a walk, after dusk, though he knew of the placards and the reward offered. Thus determined, he put on a seaman's dreadnought, and otherwise disguised, set off, and wandered about, for a considerable time, when, returning across Little Tower Hill, a man eyed him attentively, passed, and repassed him, and turning short round, exclaimed, 'So, you are the very man I am seeking.' Ryland, betraying not the least emotion, stopped short, faced him, and returned, 'Perhaps you are mistaken in your man, sir; I do not know you.' The stranger immediately apologised, owned his mistake, wished the refugee good-night, and then they parted.

"Another instance of this self-command and presence of mind occurred at the India House, when he presented his forged bond for payment, for the sum of three or four thousand pounds, on a large sheet of paper, one face of which was nearly covered with signatures. The cashier, on receiving the document, examined it carefully, and referred to the ledger; then, comparing the date, observed, 'Here is a mistake, sir; the bond as entered, does not become due until to-morrow.'

"Ryland begging permission to look at the book, on its being handed to him, observed, 'So I perceive—there must be an error in your entry of one day;' and

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offered to leave the bond, not betraying the least disappointment or surprise. The mistake appearing to the cashier to be obviously an error in his office, the bond was paid to Ryland, who departed with the money. The next day the true bond was presented, when the forgery was discovered, of course; and, within a few hours after, the fraud was made public, and steps were taken for the discovery of the perpetrator.

"This document, lately in the possession of a gentleman, now deceased, I have often seen. It is, perhaps, the most extraordinary piece of deceptive art, in the shape of imitation, that was ever produced. There are, speaking from recollection, thirty or more signatures, in hands of various styles, and in letters of as various dimensions; some being in a large and flourishing letter, others in a cramped, and some in a small hand, as well as inks of different degrees of blackness; the whole so wonderfully imitated, that it appeared, as well on the trial as subsequently, that not one, whose name was inserted in the bond, could have ventured to swear that it was not his own veritable signature.

"Mrs. Ryland, the widow of this unhappy artist, for some years after his decease, kept a print-shop in Oxford Street. Ryland was the first who engraved successfully in the dotted style. Those plates which he executed from the designs of Angelica Kauffman, were of a circular form, and printed in a red colour.

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They were greatly admired, and are still considered among the most beautiful productions of the kind."

Thus far for the principal experiences of this magistrate. We shall now turn to his exertions, and to the fruits of those exertions which were to be displayed in quite another direction.

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CHAPTER IV.

THE BOW STREET FORCES.

§ *The Patroles.*

To Sir John Fielding the public was indebted for the introduction of a useful check on highway robbery, so simple and obvious in character that it is astonishing it was not suggested before his time. Knowing the unprotected state of the roads in the environs of the city, the notorious Hounslow, Blackheath, and the unguarded commons, his energetic mind conceived the idea of an organized force, which, however small, would still furnish protection. A few men, well armed, patrolling the lonely roads, and meeting each other at fixed points, was the idea that presented itself. It took its rise in what was rather ambitiously styled THE PATROLE, which, beginning as a very small force, later developed into an important and efficient body of men. At its origin it consisted of thirteen "parties," each with a "conductor;" that is, eight

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"country parties" and five "town parties." The blind magistrate took a particular interest in this force of his own invention, and was always eager for its extension. This plan was found to be of extraordinary benefit; but he received support for it in so grudging a fashion, that we find him pleading, as if for a personal favour to himself, for a continuation of assistance, even for the useful horse-patrole :—

"Sir J. Fielding presents his most respectful compliments to Mr. Jenkinson, and in consequence of what has passed with him this morning, begs he will do him the honour to acquaint Mr. Grenville that his application for the continuance of the horse-patrole for a short time longer, as a temporary, but necessary, step, in order to complete that which had been so happily begun. . . . He flatters himself that from the amazing good effects this patrole has already had by bringing so many old offenders to justice, that a little further assistance of this kind may be sufficient to prevent these outrages from arising to a great height for a considerable time."

So successful was this plan of "a patrole" found that it was extended, in different shapes, under other magistrates. It is a popular delusion that until the advent of the New Police the safety of London was entrusted to the incapable "Charlies," or watchmen, who were supposed to perform their duties by constantly sleeping in their watch-boxes. But, in truth,

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there was an efficient body of patroles, mounted and on foot, who kept careful watch upon the roads while others looked after the streets. A more particular account of this force will be found interesting.

The "Bow Street Horse-Patrole" was not established until the year 1805, by Sir Richard Ford, who was then chief magistrate. He himself undertook the direction of it. In that year highway robberies in the various country roads leading to London became very frequent, and this practical mode of checking the abuse was adopted. Their uniform was an odd one, consisting of a leathern hat, blue coat with yellow metal buttons, blue trousers and boots, with the invariable scarlet waistcoat, while they were "armed to the teeth" with cutlass, pistols, and a truncheon. They were all splendidly mounted, and were indeed awkward customers to encounter on the high and cross roads. They were retired cavalry soldiers, received 28*s.* a week as pay, and in the year 1828 amounted to no more than fifty-four men, with six inspectors. It is astonishing to think that this modest force should have been able to watch over the innumerable high roads that converge on London; but it is agreed they did their duty with wonderful efficiency. The whole cost did not exceed 16,000*l.* a year.

The duties of this force were carried out in this fashion. They came on their "beat" at five or seven in the evening, according to the season, beginning at

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a distance of about five miles from London, and proceeding from five to ten miles, until after midnight, when they went home. The officer was directed to make himself known to all persons he met in carriages or on horseback by calling out in a loud and clear tone, "Bow Street Patrole!" The highwaymen were much disturbed by their operations, and we constantly hear of captures and encounters. The force was under the personal direction of one of the Bow Street magistrates, to whom it reported, and from whom it received instructions.

So efficient was this found that it was soon determined to add to it another, which was oddly named "The Police Dismounted Horse-Patrole," whose duty it was to protect the road lying between the beat of the horse-patrole and the city. This body was organized on a different system. They were divided into parties, each with a conductor, which patrolled a regular district of its own. Their uniform was the same as that of the horse-patrole, and they were armed with pistol, truncheon, and cutlass, and, of course, displayed the invariable scarlet waistcoat.

To these motley and heterogeneous bands Mr. Peel, in 1822, added yet another, which was called the "Day Patrole," and which seems to have been a mere roving body that could only hope by some rare chance to be of any service, for the whole body consisted of but twenty-four men and three inspectors. In 1821

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it was ordered by Lord Sidmouth that, in consequence of the numerous robberies that had taken place in the public streets and squares, the services of the night patrole should be confined altogether to the city, which was accordingly divided into sixteen districts, each with a conductor. But the whole force did not exceed some eighty men. But these were merely the preventive element. The Bow Street authorities relied more directly on another kind of assistance, and which was concerned entirely in the work of detection.

§ *The Bow Street Runners.*

In fiction as well as in reality the dramatic element nearly always was supplied by the "Bow Street Runner," popularly supposed to be a miracle of detective skill; though indeed, at the beginning of the century, the establishment at Bow Street for the detection of crime, was of a character that would have made a modern policeman smile. The business of inquiry, pursuit, and arrest of criminals, was conducted by a few "officers," not more than eight in number. Each of these, however, had, from practice and training, acquired skill, and was so trained in the peculiar school or system of Jonathan Wild, that he was equivalent to a host of constables. The "Bow Street runner," as he was called, was a name of terror to the burglar and thief, and their red waistcoats were familiar everywhere. "Their ensign of office," says

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one writer, "was a tiny baton with a gilt crown on the top; but malefactors knew perfectly well that their pockets held pistols as well as handcuffs, and that a 'Robin Redbreast' of Bow Street was as bold as his volatile namesake. In the time of Sir Richard Birnie the 'Robin Redbreasts' numbered a dozen: to wit, old Townsend and Sayer, and ten officers under these, among whom the most prominent were Ruthven, Taunton, Salmon, Leadbitter, and Gawner."

The most celebrated of these men was the well-known Townsend, who was besides a "character" in his way. He and his companions were employed in all sorts of duties, and told off for any emergency, for there appears to have been no rule or system. They attended at court, at races, and on all special occasions. They also enjoyed various perquisites and presents from those whose property they recovered. Mr. Charles Dickens, though he was an enthusiastic admirer of the modern police, has presented a rather unflattering portrait, in his "Oliver Twist," of the Bow Street runners. When Mrs. Maylie's house was broken into by Sikes, two officers were sent down.

"'Open the door,' cried a man, 'it's the officers from Bow Street.' Brittles opened the door to its full width, and confronted a portly man in a great coat, who walked in without saying anything more, and wiped his shoes on the mat as coolly as if he lived there.

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"The man who had knocked at the door was a stout personage of middle height, aged about fifty, with shiny black hair cropped pretty close, half whiskers, a round face, and sharp eyes. The other was a red-headed, bony man, in top-boots, with a rather ill-favoured countenance and a turned-up, sinister-looking nose.

"'Tell your governor Blathers and Duff is here, will you?'"

These visitors proved themselves, according to "Boz," a very incapable, weak-kneed pair, for they accepted the story prepared by the family as to Oliver, whose presence on the premises, shot as he had been, required accounting for. They were given to long stories, and readers will recall their account of "Conky Chickweed."[1]

[1] The same delightful writer has left us a sketch of the office and the magistrate. The "Mr. Fang," of whom so odious a picture is given, did not belong to Bow Street. His real name was Lang, and Dickens went specially to draw him, and it is said thus caused him to resign. When the "Dodger's" career was cut short, and he was brought up at Bow Street, one of his friends and admirers attended to see how he behaved. Here was the scene. "He found himself jostled among a crowd of people, chiefly women, who were huddled together in a dirty, frowsy room, at the upper end of which was a raised platform, railed off from the rest, with a dock for the prisoners on the left hand against the wall, a box for his witnesses in the middle, a desk for the magistrates on the right, the awful locality last named being screened off by a partition which concealed the

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Much petted as was Townsend, and profound as was the belief in his sagacity, one is inclined to suspect that he was something of an impostor. He seems to have impressed every one—thieves included—with an idea of his infinite experience, a belief he was enabled to encourage by a good memory and a useful knack of remembering faces. He cultivated an acquaintance with thieves and their places of resort, and by some lucky *coups* added to his prestige. The pleasant Angelo, before quoted, who knew "all sorts and conditions of men," shall introduce him:—

"The last time I went to a masquerade was at the Pantheon, which must have been nearly thirty years ago. I went in a domino, keeping my mask on, and after near an hour wandering about, at length I met with one whom I had known many years, dressed in a domino, with his mask on, and his portly figure soon discovered him to me. This was my old and very pleasant *slang* friend, Townsend, of Bow Street memory. Well met, arm-in-arm, we paraded together until the supper-rooms opened. 'Now,' said he, 'I'll show you some fun, only stop, when we soon

bench from the common gaze. The room smelt close and unwholesome, the walls were dirt-discoloured, and the ceiling blackened. There was an old smoky bust over the mantelshelf, and a dirty clock above the dock, the only thing that seemed to go on as it ought." Every one will recall the Dodger's pleasant familiarities.

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shall see the *coves* and *motts* fall to *grub;* they'll then doff their sham phizzes. You'll see I shall soon unkennel them.' Having such a *protégé*, I kept close to him; though I have enjoyed many a masquerade adventure, this was a superior treat to me. He kept his word; for the very first room we entered he had something to say of the parties. At supper, between two ladies, was an elegant-looking young man, in regimentals and black domino; he had a handsome cut-steel button and loop to his hat, which was surmounted by a lofty plumage. He was just touching his glass to his two fair companions, when my intelligent *conducteur* went behind him, and tapped him on the shoulder.

"'Come, be off.' 'Mr. Townsend,' said the would-be captain, 'don't take me from my bub and grub.' Townsend, however, with great good-nature, suffered him to remain, but as he was a notorious character the myrmidons of the police kept an eye upon him. In the course of the evening, to my surprise, I had many individuals, gentlemen of the 'conveying fraternity,' pointed out to me, whom, from their genteel appearance, I considered to be men of fashion; indeed, some of them I had spoken to, as coffee-house acquaintance. Many years ago, at the Opera House, when it was the fashion, between the acts, to go behind the scenes, Townsend was always to be seen there, and many of the sprigs of fashion used to

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crowd round (for he was a general favourite), with 'How are you, Townsend? what's the go?' when with good-humour he would indulge their fancy, answering them in such a manner (knowing their drift to get him into conversation) that the greater part he said was quite unintelligible to them.

"Once, however, my witty acquaintance, Townsend, met with his match behind the scenes in the Haymarket, as an individual was present who seemed to know the whole slang vocabulary by heart, and the conversation highly delighted a number of persons who stood round to listen. The gentleman to whom I allude, was an officer of the Guards, on duty there that night. Though Townsend was *up to it*, the officer certainly was *down upon him*, to the great amusement of the listeners, and the former was scarcely able to keep pace with him."

Townsend, from his long experience, and the select duties in which he was employed, became a "privileged" person, and, as it is called, "quite a character." A chronicler, who had seen a great deal of "life," named Richardson, has left us a not very favourable account of him. "This man," he tells us, "who was said to have commenced life as a costermonger, became by effrontery and impudence, enhanced by a certain share of low cunning and low wit, the head of his profession. He derived a large income from the Christmas boxes of the nobility and

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of other parties at whose routs he was employed to detect, or keep away, improper characters, who, he persuaded his patrons would be present if *he* were not in attendance. As to his personal appearance, he was a very smart little man, clean as paint, to use his own phrase, and I think peculiar in his costume. He was generally encased in a light and loud suit, knee-breeches, and short gaiters, and a white hat of great breadth of brim. Once, when he was bathing near Millbank, some thieves maliciously stole his clothes, and it was said he was compelled to run home in the state he emerged from the water. At his death it was reported that he had made accumulations from the guinea a day at the bank, the nobility, the money from prosecutions, &c., to the amount of 20,000*l.* He was often seen in familiar conversation with George III., whose good-humoured face was convulsed with laughter at his stories."

Captain Gronow tells us that "He was a sort of privileged person, and could say what he liked." On one occasion the Duke of Clarence recommended Townsend to publish his memoirs, "which he thought would be very interesting." Townsend, who had become somewhat deaf, seemed rather surprised, but said he would obey H.R.H.'s commands. A few weeks afterwards Townsend was on duty at Carlton House, when the Duke asked him if he had fulfilled his promise. His answer was—

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"Oh, sir, you've got me into a devil of a scrape! I had begun to write my *amours*, as you desired, when Mrs. Townsend caught me in the act of writing them, and swore she'd be revenged; for you know, your Royal Highness, I was obliged to divulge many secrets about women, for which she'll never forgive me."

When the Duke became king, on a memorable occasion, in a fit of anger, he swore he would order a hackney-coach to go to the House. Upon which Townsend, to the amazement of every one, cried out from behind a screen,—

"Well said, sir; I think your Majesty is d——d right."

The King, much surprised and amused, called out,—

"Is that you, Townsend?"

"*Yes, sir; I am here to see that your Majesty has fair play!*"

At an installation of the Knights of the Garter, the then Duchess of Northumberland was fain to put herself under his protection, and accept his arm, "as he conducted her *through a mob of nobles and others*, to her place in the chapel."

From an account of him, given in a 'Trip to Ascot,' we learn how he was led to the profession. "Originally he was fond of hearing the trials at the Old Bailey, and also of *noting* down in a book persons who were acquitted, and likewise those found guilty,

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with their sentences, &c., by which means he became a sort of oracle at 'the *Start*,' and obtained the title of 'Counsellor Double Head.' His superiority of information respecting the thieves and other bad characters in the metropolis, thus obtained by his assiduity and attention, gave him a certain notoriety, which soon made its way to the *listeners* of the *beaks*, and our hero accordingly was appointed to the situation of a police officer. The *slouched* castor, the open breeches at the knees, the short jacket, the *fogle* loosely twisted round his *squeeze*, the large *wedge* broach, the long-quartered shoe and silver buckles, the bit of myrtle in his *gig*, and the cut altogether of a '*rolling kiddy*' was banished for the more reputable appearance of a smart *Trap*.

"Townsend soon proved himself a most active officer; and his *name* alone became a terror to the wicked and abandoned part of the community. It became a fashion with great personages to say, 'How do you do, Townsend?' It was not uncommon to announce some crowded rout with the advertisement—'*Mr. Townsend will attend.*' This was pursued to a ridiculous extent, and the artful fellow, to increase his imposture, would, in particular crowds, caution noble ladies to be on their guard, and they would hand over their watches and jewellery on the spot to Mr. Townsend's kind and safe keeping. In the restoration of the articles it was equally the fashion

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to remunerate Mr. Townsend for his thoughtfulness and trouble. At Christmas time he grew into the habit of 'making' friendly calls upon 'the nobility and gentlemen' to offer them his compliments of the season, while congratulations were returned in a suitable way." (The italicised words belong to the "flash" style of the times.)

Amongst other anecdotes circulated respecting Townsend, the following shows his aptness: Mr. Bond, a most active, intelligent police officer, was made a magistrate at Bow Street for his services. In a dispute some time afterwards Mr. Bond rather warmly told him that "he took too much upon himself; but he supposed Townsend thought himself a magistrate." "No, indeed I do not, your worship," replied Townsend, in a sarcastic manner, "the King said he had committed an error in making one police officer a magistrate; but he would not repeat the mistake by elevating another."

"Two young noblemen meeting him one day near the palace, one of the above *sprigs* of nobility said to the other, 'I will introduce you to old Townsend, I know him well. Come here, Townsend!' said he with considerable hauteur, at the same time taking a pinch of snuff, and surveying the veteran officer from head to foot; 'I wish to ascertain a fact; but 'pon my honour, I do not intend to distress your feelings; in the early part of your life were you not a coal-heaver?'

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'Yes, my lord,' answered Townsend, making a bow with the most profound respect, 'it is very true; but let me tell your lordship, if you had been reared as a coal-heaver you would have remained a coal-heaver up to the present hour.'"

Townsend, a few years after he had obtained great notoriety as a police officer, underwent a severe cross-examination, at the Old Bailey, by Counsellor Garrow (now the present venerable Judge Garrow).

Question. How do you get your living, sir?

Answer. You know me very well, Mr. Garrow.

Q. I insist upon knowing how you get your livelihood? Recollect, sir, you are upon your oath.

A. Yes, sir, I have taken a great many oaths in my time; but *I* ought to have said, *professionally!*

Q. To the question, and no equivocation?

A. Why then, sir, I get my livelihood in the same way you do!

Q. How is that, fellow?

A. I am paid for *taking up* thieves; and you are paid for "*getting them off!*" that is much about the same sort of thing.

Q. You consider yourself a *sharp shot*, don't you, Townsend?

A. No, sir,—but I like to *hit* the MARK.

Q. You may stand *down*, fellow?

A. I am glad, sir, you found me *up!*

This seems poor wit enough, but it shows us that

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the pert, self-satisfied, and "spoiled" official, Grummer, in "Pickwick," was of the same type, and, it is not unlikely, was intended for Townsend. This acquired position almost seemed to entitle him to equal rights with the magistrates, who did not venture to check, or interfere with him. As when a well-dressed thief was brought up for robbing a gentleman in the park, we find the old officer, when giving evidence, offering his own opinions and professional instincts, instead of legal evidence.

He told his story in his usual peculiar quaint way. "I was going," he said, "that morning down the passage leading from Spring Gardens into St. James's Park, as a party of the Foot Guards had passed before in that direction. I found there was an obstruction, and a gentleman said to me, 'Townsend; what is the cause of this; the road is choked up?' I said to him, 'You may depend upon it some old acquaintances of mine have caused the obstruction to create a confusion and to pick pockets.' I then went to the iron pillars, and saw the prisoner and two other fellows talking in their usual slang language; they had surrounded an elderly gentleman, and were *ogling* his pockets, when he appeared to be aware of their intentions, and prevented them from carrying them into effect. One of the robbers said to the prisoner, who was acting in concert with them, 'I had nearly drawn that old flat's *skin*, but he baulked me.' I (continued Townsend) looked

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the prigs full in the face, and said, 'If you had drawn his *skin*, I would have *grabbed* you—(laughter)—and they ran off as fast as they could." Mr. Hall: "What is the meaning of 'skin' and 'grab,' Mr. Townsend?" Townsend, "'Skin' means purse, and 'grab' means to apprehend. When they ran off, I cut round into the park in another direction, and fell in with the prisoner, and gave him into the charge of a policeman." This was all amusing enough, and gratifying to the "runner." But the magistrate naturally asked, "Are you certain he was committing a robbery?" Townsend, answered, "I never saw the prisoner before, but when I saw him *ogling* the gentleman's pocket, and being a *cover* to the other thieves, I said to myself 'Townsend, as sure as thou art in existence, that's as arrant a thief as ever drew a *wipe* from the tail of a coat.' On inquiry I found he was one of the most active robbers, &c."

The peculiarities, vanity, and garrulousness of the old officer, were yet more effectively displayed in a scene which took place in the Bow Street Office, in October, 1827, when Sir Richard Birnie humoured him to the top of his bent. An eccentric Mr. Summerfield had applied for a warrant against a baker, residing at Islington, who had sent him a challenge to fight a duel. Having shown to Sir R. Birnie the letter containing the challenge, a warrant was ordered to be issued immediately. During the investigation of this case, Townsend, the police-officer, "who has the honour of

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being police attendant on His Majesty," entered the office. Sir Richard Birnie said to him, "John Townsend, you are come very opportunely to execute a warrant, and prevent a duel from taking place; here is a challenge sent by a baker to the clerk of a lead-mill proprietor." John Townsend raised himself upon his toes, and looked at Sir R. Birnie, with his usual knowing expression of *physog.*, hardly conceiving whether the magistrate was in jest or in earnest, and replied,—

"Why, Sir Richard Birnie, I beg leave to tell you, that I think it would lessen me a great deal if I were to execute a warrant upon a barber (he had mistaken the word baker for barber), after forty-six years' service, during which period I have had the honour of taking Earls, Marquises, and Dukes. No, no, Sir Richard, let the barber fight if he likes it; but don't let me be degraded by executing the warrant." Sir Richard Birnie intimated to the veteran officer, that he meant nothing more than a jest in asking him to serve the warrant. Townsend said he thought so; and having adjusted his flaxen wig, he said, "Why, Sir Richard, I was employed to apprehend the late Duke of Norfolk and Sir John Honeywood, when they went out to fight a duel; and I also apprehended Colonel Macnamara and Colonel Harvey Aston, the latter of whom was afterwards shot in a duel in the East Indies. I also apprehended the late Marquis Townshend and Mr. Ponsonby, on a like occasion;

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and I remember that I received the warrant to apprehend Colonel Lennox (afterwards Duke of Richmond) and the Duke of York, and prevent their fighting a duel; but they had met, and settled their dispute before I got to the spot. God knows how many great men I have taken—why I apprehended Mr. King and Lord Paget (now Marquis of Anglesea), when they were going out to fight a duel; and I remember Lord Paget's father (the Earl of Uxbridge) told me not to prevent their meeting, for his son was good for nothing if he did not go out and fight. Besides, now it occurs to me, that I was applied to at my own house, by Mr. Pitt and Mr. Dundas, late one night, to go in quest of Earl St. Vincent and Sir John Orde. The fact was, that Earl St. Vincent, who had nothing but his country's glory in view, broke through the rules of Royal etiquette; and, instead of sending the second in command, Sir J. Orde, on an expedition to the Nile, he despatched the immortal Nelson; and after the victory was over, and the naval armament returned to England, Sir John Orde sent a challenge to Earl St. Vincent, and I took the parties and prevented their meeting."

Sir R. Birnie complimented Townsend upon his public services, and another officer was sent to serve the warrant upon the baker, at Islington. The officer who was entrusted with the warrant, stated that he had been unable to apprehend Mr. Summerfield, and he had

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discovered that a hoax had been played off upon Mr. M'Diarmid.

This specimen of Mr. Townsend's style in a public office shows that the old officer must have become something of a standing nuisance, with his perpetual reminiscences of the Royal family and of noblemen and gentlemen.

But with age and an increasing reputation his many peculiarities increased. He gave his opinions freely to king and princes, and there was certainly a free and easy self-sufficiency in his remarks that was highly amusing. What caused his employment about the Court was the attack by Margaret Nicholson upon the King. The palaces were afterwards frequently infested with mad people, one of whom actually got into the Queen's Palace, and found his way into the private apartments of the Princess of Homburg. Three of the porters were in consequence discharged; and Townsend and "the late Macmanus" were appointed to attend the Court.

Soon after he commenced his attendance at the levées, a nobleman had the insignia of the Order of the Garter cut from his side. The loss was instantly discovered, and notice of the fact was given through the rooms, and down-stairs, to detect the thief, as the company passed him. At length a person passed who, he had a strong suspicion, ought not to be at Court, but the difference of Court dress changes the

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appearance of a person so much, that he was not certain as to the character. He therefore followed the man a few paces, looking him full in the face, and then discovered him to be an old thief, and took him into custody; and on searching him, the stolen property was found.

When the Catholic Question was under discussion in the House of Lords, Townsend met in Parliament Street, two members of the peerage, one an opponent of the Catholic claims, and the other, a much younger man, an advocate of them. In answer to some observation by Townsend on this subject, the elder peer made a strong remark, which appeared to please the veteran police-officer. The young peer then offered an opinion on the other side, but was interrupted by Townsend, who said, "Young man, young man, mind what his lordship says—treasure up every word of it." "But, Mr. Townsend," said the peer, "allow me to explain." "Explain—explain! I want no explanation, I know all about it, and his lordship understands it as well—young man, young man—it is a question of life and death, *Go home and consider it.*"

Speaking of George the Fourth, he would say, "God rest him, he *was* a king, only two or three people could get at him; but this new king (William the Fourth) why, bless you, sir, he isn't half a king; he makes himself too cheap. Anybody may get at him." Whilst speaking of the opera, alluding to the upstarts, as he

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called them, he said, "Bless you, sir, I knew the opera fifty years ago, and then it was worthy of being called a King's Theatre, for only the nobility had boxes; but now you may see a duchess on one side and a wholesale cheesemonger's wife on the other. I remember the time when there were masquerades, too, and the king—God bless him!—(he was only Prince of Wales then) used to have nice freaks on such occasions. Many a time have I taken him by the skirt of the coat when he was going in, and said to him, I would advise your Royal Highness, if you have got any money about you, to leave it with me for safety; and then he would pull out a purse with fifty or sixty guineas in it, and say, 'Well, but Townsend, you must allow me something to spend, you know;' and upon that I used to hand him over about five guineas, keeping the rest and his watch in my own pocket, where few people would have thought of looking for them."

Once in St. James's Park, he met the Duke of Clarence. "Holloa, Townsend, where do you come from?" "I am just come from your royal brother of York, and he gave me one of the best glasses of wine I ever tasted." "Well, Townsend," said the Duke, "come and see me, and I promise to give you as good a glass of wine as my brother York can give." "Ah!" says Townsend, "that's not all, for when I admired the wine, your royal brother of York calls for his butler, and desires him to bring two bottles for Mrs.

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Townsend; and here," added Townsend, "here they are," pulling one out of each pocket, and showing them to the duke.

This singular functionary continued in the service till his death, which occurred in the year 1832. It was remembered that he was much depressed during the passage of the Reform Bill; and he used to say, shrugging up his shoulders, "It's all up now!"

About five days before his death allusion being made to the peculiar cut of his hat, the old officer said, "That hat, sir, was given to me by George IV., God rest his soul." "Well, but Townsend," said the gentleman, "I thought it had been your own cut." "God bless your soul, and so it was; the King took his cut from mine, and many times used to say, that till that time he had never looked like a gentleman."

"On the Wednesday previous to his decease, when attending the King's levee, he enjoyed his usual health, and was full of joke and conversation in his way, particularly with the Marquis of Wellesley and the Marquis of Salisbury, who congratulated him on his good looks, and how well he carried his age, &c., &c. The Sunday following, he went to St. Peter's Church, Pimlico, where he had a pew, and regularly attended divine service. He enjoyed the company of a friend the latter part of the day. On the Monday morning he rose early and proceeded to the bank, where his indisposition increased to an alarming degree. He

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returned home to Pimlico in a coach, when he was taken ill and died shortly after." Such was Townsend.

Vickery, another well-known runner, had been a harness-maker, and came from the neighbourhood of Basingstoke. Becoming an officer at Worship Street, his activity and intelligence made him a great favourite with Mr. Nares, the magistrate; and when that gentleman was promoted to the chief office, Bow Street, he obtained his appointment there also. Vickery was conductor of the east-end party of the patrole. The responsible duty of escorting the dollars to be stamped at Birmingham was entrusted to him, in conjunction with the late Stephen Lavender. It was to Vickery that instructions were given to apprehend the French prisoners of war who had escaped upon their parole of honour, and in this business he was wonderfully successful.

A very ingenious plan was laid to rob the Post Office. Vickery received information of the fact, and communicated it to the authorities. They doubted the truth of this story, and a special meeting was called, at which were present the Postmasters-General, for at that time there were two, Sir Francis Freeling, and Mr. Anthony Parkin, the then solicitor to the establishment. Vickery attended, and to the astonishment of every one present, actually produced the keys that had been made for the purpose of effecting the robbery, and opened every door in succession, until he

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arrived at the treasure which was intended to be the prize of the thieves. It appeared from the information he had collected, that the robbers had twice or thrice visited the premises, but would not take away the booty, thinking that if they waited a little longer, it would be much increased. This was one of the happy *coups de théâtre* by which the runners knew how to impress the public.

His activity and energy were conspicuously displayed in reference to the great robbery at Rundell and Bridge's. Two Jews called at their shop on Ludgate Hill, and selected articles of jewellery to the amount of 35,000*l.* Having done so, they requested to be allowed to seal them up that no mistake might occur, and they would call on the following day and pay for them. No suspicion being entertained, they were allowed to pack up the goods, and seal them. Being provided with small parcels resembling the others, they adroitly possessed themselves of the valuable ones, leaving in exchange some rubbish, packed and sealed in the same way. Vickery was consulted, and he was not long in ascertaining that a portion of the property had gone to the Continent. He started in company with one of the firm, and traced the delinquents through France, Holland, Frankfort, and eventually succeeded in recovering 20,000*l.* worth of the stolen property. The firm made him a very liberal present.

Another of these functionaries, Donaldson, had

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special care of the saloons at the theatres Covent Garden and Drury Lane. It seems astonishing now that under the direction of the austere John Kemble, these disorderly places should have been tolerated. Even now as we enter the one theatre in London which represents the old dispensation, viz. Drury Lane, we wonder at the spaciousness and magnificence of the deserted saloon, with its pillars and arches, and can scarcely realize the time when it was crammed to overflowing with a strangely mixed crowd of the so-called "fast" of both sexes, as, indeed, we may see in the adventures of "Tom and Jerry," and their friend Bob Logic.

"This man," says Mr. Richardson, "never bore a very high reputation for virtue of any sort. He was, however, perfectly acquainted with the haunts, proceedings, practices, and plans of thieves, pickpockets, and rogues; and in the state of London at the time his services were found useful. There was plenty of carrion in the saloons of the theatres, and plenty of pickpockets were there also. Donaldson was accustomed from time to time to exclaim with a loud voice,—

"'*Take care of your pockets!*'

"Most persons considered this exclamation as a warning to the unwary. Others, less charitably inclined, affirmed that it was a notice given to the pickpockets to be on the look-out, and take heed who the

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gentlemen were who, immediately put their hands in their pockets to ascertain that the contents were safe, and thus furnished the thieves with a clue to where they could go to work with the greatest chance of success."

This officer's death was as strange as his life. He was sitting amongst the company at the Brown Bear, Bow Street, indulging in the things in which he and his associates delighted, and in that kind of discourse which expands distinctions of opinions into a mode of argumentation that neglects all distinctions whatever. After the re-establishment of order, the company resumed their seats, and everything went on well for some time. One of the party, looking round, asked,—

"What's become of Donaldson?"

"Oh," replied another, "he's 'cut.'"

The conversation was renewed, and some regret expressed at the absence of him, by whose contributions it was generally enlivened. After some time, a gentleman present observed,—

"Here's a dog fast asleep under the table; I have kicked him several times, but he won't move, and now he has rolled round against my legs."

"Turn him out," said the landlord; "I'll have no dogs here," and stooping down, he laid hold of what he thought was the dog, when, to his alarm and surprise, he perceived the body of Donaldson, who had passed from "life into death," with a suddenness, and under

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circumstances which startled the apathy of those assembled, though accustomed to scenes of horror.

One of the boldest and most resolute of the Bow Street officers was Macmanus. It was on his death, as we have seen, that Townsend and Sayer were appointed to fill his situation of attending the King. His successor Sayer, was often heard to express the highest admiration of the courage displayed by Macmanus upon all occasions.

"A service of danger," said he, "had no terrors upon his mind; he went in pursuit of the most desperate characters with the utmost cheerfulness, ease, and indifference: and he performed his arduous duty like a brave but humane officer. With the *mild*, he was mild; yet terrible amongst the *terrible*; but when he was resisted in his situation as an officer of Justice, and compelled to fight in his own defence against those abandoned persons whose lives had become forfeited by their crimes, his existence appeared no object to him; and," observed Sayer, "I have known Macmanus lose rivers of blood!"

After the establishment of the "New Police" a few of the "runners" lingered on, pensioned, or following other callings. One of the most celebrated died so lately as 1844. This was George Ruthven, one of the most intrepid of men, who was concerned in some desperate arrests and conflicts. "He was the oldest and most celebrated of the few remaining Bow Street

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runners, among whom death has lately made such ravages, and was considered as the most efficient police-officer that existed during his long career of usefulness. He was for thirty years attached to the police force, having entered it at the age of seventeen; but in 1839 he retired with a pension of 220*l.* from the British Government, and pensions likewise from the Russian and Prussian Governments, for his services in discovering forgeries to an immense extent connected with those countries. Since 1839 he has been landlord of the "One Tun Tavern," Chandos Street, Covent Garden, and has visited most frequently the spot of his former associations. Among his many notorious captures may be reckoned those of Thistlewood, for the Cato Street conspiracy, in which daring enterprise Smithers was killed: the taking of Thurtell, the murderer of Mr. Weare, and the discovery of bank robberies and forgeries on Government to an enormous amount. He was a most eccentric character, and had written a history of his life, but would on no account allow it to meet the public eye. During the last three months no less than three of the old Bow Street officers, namely, Goodson, Salmon, and Ruthven, have paid the debt of nature." This was written in 1844.

But indeed the intrepidity of the officers was always remarkable, and the desperation and violence of the lawless characters they were sent to arrest often rendered their service one of extreme danger. Armstrong,

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who died in 1828, had a long record of hand-to-hand encounters with burglars and such characters. On one occasion he and a noted highwayman fought along the roofs of three houses in Chatham. The robber fired a pistol without effect, and Armstrong closing with him, the fellow endeavoured to precipitate both into the street; but the officer succeeded in bringing him down, and he was afterwards executed. The noted Jeremiah Abershaw and Armstrong had a similar *rencontre* in Bridgwater Gardens, but not with the same success, for "Jerry," after snapping his pistol, dashed himself through a lath and plaster partition, and escaped by the roof of the house. About seven years ago, Armstrong, on going through Rose Lane, Spitalfields, alone and without arms, was suddenly rushed upon by a noted highway-robber, named Barry, and four others, who beat him in an unmerciful manner. Armstrong, four years ago, petitioned to retire, and, as his salary was only 25*s.* per week, he naturally expected full pay; but he was allowed to retire, after fifty years' public service, upon a pension of 18*s.* per week."

It was Ruthven who, at the peril of his life, apprehended Thistlewood. Thurtell, a desperado of the blackest caste, was, with singular ingenuity, seized by him, and conveyed by that officer alone to Hertford gaol. He travelled after delinquents to all parts of the continent and America, and was eminently

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successful in his captures. Yet, after such service, when the New Police was established, these old servants were dismissed with small pensions, to the indignation of their friends and admirers, and of the public.

One of the most persevering and successful of these thief-takers was Keys, who is said to have captured the last malefactor that was executed for coining. To the detection of this branch of crime—"smashing," as it was called—he devoted himself. There was a coiner, one James Coleman, who was so shrewd and cautious as to defy all attempts made to secure him. Such was his ingenuity and tact that he evaded justice, during a hot pursuit of the police, for many months. Keys, at that time, was in the Bow Street day patrole; he knew that Coleman was "*making the showful*," as it was called in the slang, but could not discover where he lived. The plan pursued by the coiner was this: he never entered even the street where he lived if he observed any one about at all strange to the neighbourhood, nor did he take the produce of his labour out himself for sale, but was always followed by a little girl with a basket containing it. He supplied shillings at the rate of four shillings a score, and other spurious moneys in proportion. The little girl left the counterfeits with the *smashers*, and Coleman received the money. Limbrick, of the Hatton Garden office, who was at the time very zealous in the cause of the Mint,

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and had earned some fame by apprehending coiners, used every exertion to take this man, but without effect. Either Keys or Limbrick could have brought home to him the connection with the little girl and the basket, but that was not sufficient for the ends the Mint had in view; their object was to get him taken for the capital offence, viz. in the act of coining; and to that end Keys set his ingenuity to work. He hired a man, at an expense of three-and-sixpence per day, to pass through the street where he suspected Coleman lived, morning and afternoon, in the garb of a milk-man, carrying a yoke and a pair of pails, having previously been made acquainted with the person of Coleman by Keys. After the man had done this duty for nearly two months he began to think it useless, but Keys knew that if Coleman did reside in the street, the longer the man with the pails continued his employment the better, because it would lull suspicion to him, if he entertained any, of his being a spy. At length their patience was rewarded by Coleman making his appearance. Looking out about eight o'clock one morning, and seeing no one in the street but the milk-man, he ventured from his door to feed his chickens. The supposed milk-dealer hastened to inform Keys of the circumstance, and that officer, in conjunction with others of the patrole, surprised the coiners that night. "When I got to the top of the stairs," said Keys, "I could hear Jem and his woman, Rhoda Coleman, as

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she was called, conversing about the coin while working. 'That's a rum 'un, Rhoda,' said Jem. I was about," continued Keys, "to break the door in with my foot; in fact, I had lifted my leg up, and had placed my back against the opposite wall for that purpose, when I heard Coleman say, 'Rhoda, go and get us a quartern of gin.' I waited about two minutes, and she opened the door to go out for the gin. I and my comrades rushed in and secured Coleman with the moulds and work red-hot in his hands. He was surprised, but cool. 'Do yer want me, master?' said he, looking up in my face. 'Of course I do, Jem,' said I; and having handcuffed him, I proceeded to search the place. We took away upwards of twenty pounds' worth of counterfeit coin, as well as all the implements, &c., used in the process of manufacturing it." Coleman was tried, convicted, and executed. The woman was acquitted.

"Rhoda," continued Keys, "removed the body to her lodgings, and kept it for twelve days. I had information three times that if I went I should find Rhoda coining again, and that the moulds, &c., were concealed in the coffin, under the body of poor Jem Coleman. This, I afterwards ascertained, was the fact."

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CHAPTER V.

THE POLICE SYSTEM.

In 1828, Mr. Stafford, who had been connected with the police twenty years, and who was well known as the official chief clerk at Bow Street, gave a little sketch of the office and staff to the committee of the House of Commons. He said that the eight principal officers at that time attached to the office were Townsend, John Sayer, John Vickery, Daniel Bishop, Samuel Taunton, William Salmon, George Ruthven, and James John Smith. "Townsend and Sayer generally attended his Majesty when he was out of town. They are now at Brighton. Salmon and Ruthven have been upon the continent in pursuit of persons who have absconded with property belonging to their employers in the city. They are both returned. Bishop has been at a variety of places in the country—I think three or four different places—on business. Taunton has been to the assizes. A little while before that he followed some offenders to Scotland, and brought them from thence. Vickery has been employed a good deal in making inquiries

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for the post-office, relative to some offences that have been committed there. He has been also in Hampshire, where he is remaining unwell. In fact, he has never been well since he was very ill-used some time ago, and nearly murdered. Smith has been employed in a variety of matters in Kent and Essex, and at Norwich, and latterly at Baldock, in Hertfordshire. In fact, when they are not called out of town to attend to offences committed in the country, they devote their time and attention to the discharge of their duty in London." He then explained how, when an application was made for the attendance of a police officer, and the party proposed to remunerate the police-officer for his time and trouble, the practice was to attend to such applications, and if an officer could be spared, to send one to perform it. "If he cannot be spared we generally select one of the most intelligent and best-informed men upon the police establishment. Of course the magistrates attend to the nature of the offence committed. We have frequent applications with regard to matters that perhaps are not thought to come exactly within the scope of the police, and the parties do not get the attendance of an officer. The remuneration, I believe, is very little considered. If the magistrates thought it an offence of that magnitude that required their immediate attention and assistance, an officer would be sent. At all events the question of remuneration

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would be left to be settled afterwards." This, however, as will be seen, was quite too partial a view. The wheels of the detective car moved but sluggishly, or scarcely at all, if ungreased, as it was called.

When the system was most flourishing, viz. about 1820, it will scarcely be credited that the whole force available for despatch to the country, was no more than six or eight! These were the "runners" of the first class, such as Ruthven, Townsend, Sayer, Vickery, Bishop, and others, whose long experience and professional "scent" rendered even a single visit about as valuable as that of a first-rate physician brought down "special" for a desperate case. Each of these men was entitled to receive but 1*l.* 5*s.* a week regular salary. But any one sending for them was expected to pay a guinea a day, besides 14*s.* a day travelling expenses. It was obvious that this wretched remuneration would not suffice to stimulate the energies of the officers; and where some great robbery, say from a bank or house of business, had been committed, handsome gratuities were looked for and received. It was noted that the men were always anxious to leave their town duties for these "country jobs." Sir Richard Birnie, who, from long service and old fashion, believed that his Bow Street officer was "the best of all possible officers," declared that though this remuneration was expected, it was never enforced, being left to the liberality of the parties; and on such

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not being forthcoming, the office took care that the men did not lose by their journey. It was boasted, indeed, that at Bow Street, of all the police offices, "everything was paid for" liberally.

As might be expected from such a system, the "runners" indemnified themselves in many less legitimate modes. Indeed, it almost came to this, that every real service became a special one, and no efficient aid was likely to be rendered unless it was recognized on such special terms. Townsend and Lavender frankly expounded these methods. It was a custom that a sum of 40*l.* was usually allowed for distribution among the witnesses and officers on a conviction for a felony; the latter estimating their total receipts under this head at about 20*l.* to 30*l.* a year to each officer. It was believed, however, that much more was received. Thus, when there were Bank or City prosecutions, the officers were paid by the particular bank, and for their attendance at the trial. There was also the sale of what were called the "Tyburn Tickets," and for special duties at the Court and Brighton. But, in his own characteristic style, Townsend thus recounted these sources of profit. He explained that "his duty was to attend when any of the magistrates want my assistance within the jurisdiction of Middlesex, for I cannot go out of town on account of attending on the court-days, and particularly if there is anything wanted at Windsor. Or

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supposing that the Prince goes out of town to Brighton, and so on, then we attend there. When the Regent goes to Brighton, for instance, Sayer and I go. It frequently happened, in the early part of my life, that the public may want an officer, especially public bodies; for instance, the Excise office, the Custom House, the Stamp office, the Bank, they all come there; and if they see an officer, whoever is in the way, they instantly go, because if they were to wait for matter of form, perhaps the party they wanted to apprehend would be gone. An officer from Bow Street is not constantly in attendance at the Bank. Only ten days a quarter. That Sayer and I do every quarter, and have done for many years—these five-and-twenty years, I dare say. Depredations used to be committed there dreadfully at dividend times. We have a guinea a day for it. That is paid by the Bank."

He then explained the system of giving rewards on conviction. "The usual way in distributing the 40*l.* on conviction is, that the recorder gives the prosecutor from five to fifteen and twenty pounds, according to circumstances, and the apprehender the remainder; that comes to, perhaps, only three or four pounds apiece, though the world runs away with the ridiculous idea that the officers have 40*l.* It is a singular circumstance, but in all cases of felony there are but two cases where there is any reward at all; those are

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a highway robbery and a burglary; all the others are mere bagatelles."

He then explained the nature of the Tyburn Tickets, which exempted from serving as constable and other parish offices. "These are worth 20*l.* apiece. I have sold them as low as 12*l.* In such a parish as St. George's, Hanover Square, the people are of so much consequence that they will serve themselves. The highest is in Covent Garden, where it is worth 25*l.*; for the constable of the parish must sit up, I think, one night out of three; and whoever is hit upon as a parochial constable says, 'This is a hard thing, and therefore I will buy myself off;' and a ticket in that parish, therefore, is worth more. If an officer gets a guinea a day, it is a chance whether he gets any reward; that must depend upon the liberality of those public offices who choose to pay it. *I am very sorry to say that sometimes they are rather mean upon that subject.*

"Sometimes I have myself, in the early part of my life, when I was in the habit of going to do the business for public offices, been out of town for a week or a fortnight. I went to Dunkirk in the year 1786 to fetch over four that were hanged. I went for Mr. Taylor, a Hamburg merchant. There are certain cases in which we may be employed longer. There have been officers for eight or ten days on the poaching cases. Vickery was down for a fortnight in Gloucestershire, with Colonel Berkeley. Frequently it takes

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a great deal of time to detect a banditti like that. In those cases where the individual, in a case similar to that you have just mentioned, sends for a Bow Street officer, the expense of his journey, and the payment of his trouble, is defrayed by the individual."

Townsend, when he was examined before the Committee, furnished quite an entertainment, so shrewd and sensible were his opinions. He gave his evidence in an amusingly familiar tone, as indeed was then expected from one so intimate with the royal and noble personages. On being asked as to the policy of rewarding police in cash for obtaining convictions, and whether it would not be better to leave it to the decision of the magistrate or judge, he said,—

"I have always thought so; from the earliest part of my time I have thought it, and for the best of all reasons; I have, with every attention that man could bestow, watched the conduct of various persons who have given evidence against their fellow-creatures for life or death, not only at the Old Bailey, but on the circuits, and I have always been perfectly convinced that would be the best mode that possibly could be adopted to pay officers, *particularly because they are dangerous creatures;* they have it frequently in their power (no question about it) to turn that scale, when the beam is level, on the other side; I mean against the poor wretched man at the bar. Why? *this thing called Nature* says profit in the scale; and, melancholy

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to relate, but I cannot help being perfectly satisfied, that frequently that has been the means of convicting many and many a man.

"*I told Sir Charles Bunbury my opinion* upon that subject thirty years ago, when he wanted to get rid of rewards, that it should be in the breast of the judges on the circuit, if they see the officer has done his duty towards the public, they should have a discriminating power to pay that officer according to the nature of the case. Then the officer does not stand up and look at this unfortunate creature, and swear to this or that thing, or the other thing, for what, for the lucre—*for Nature is Nature, do with us what you will;* for I have been always of opinion, that an officer is a dangerous subject to the community, if he is not so kept and so paid as to afford him the means of being honest; for in some cases, God knows, it has been frequently the case.

"I remember a case, which was proved, in the time of the trading magistrates, where there was a fellow who, a public officer belonging to Justice Hyde, was hanged, and yet he was one of the officers. Justice Welch in Litchfield Street was a great man in those days, and old Justice Hyde, and Justice Girdler, and Justice Blackborough, a *trading Justice* at Clerkenwell Green, and an old ironmonger. The plan used to be to issue out warrants and take up all the poor devils in the streets, and then there was the bailing them

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2*s.* 4*d.* which the magistrates had; and taking up a hundred girls, that would make, at 2*s.* 4*d.*, 11*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* They sent none to gaol, for the bailing of them was so much better. That was so glaring that it led to the Police Bill, and it was a great blessing to the public to do away with those men, for they were nothing better than the encouragers of blackguards, vice, and plunderers; there is no doubt about it."

Being asked was it not likely that a rich criminal might have an influence over a needy officer? "No question about it," said he. "I will give the committee a case in point; supposing, for instance, when I convicted Broughton, which, I believe, is now twenty-two years ago, and who was convicted for robbing the York Mail, I convicted at the same assizes, the summer assizes, a celebrated old woman, Mrs. Usher, worth at least three thousand guineas, for she made over that property by her attorney. I was then in the habit of attending Vauxhall, for which I received half-a-guinea, and a half-pint of wine, which I relinquished, and took the fifteen pence.

"Mrs. Usher picked a lady's pocket; I was close by, and secured her. She was tried before Baron Hotham. Mr. Ives, the gaoler in Surrey, before the trial, came to me, and said, 'Townsend, you know Mother Usher very well?' 'Yes,' said I, 'these ten years.' He said, 'Cannot this be *stashed?*' meaning put an end to.

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"I said, 'No, it was impossible that it could be; because the case was very plain, and of all women upon earth she ought to be convicted: and in my opinion, if she is convicted capitally, nothing but her sex and her old age ought to save her from being executed; and I shall think it my duty when she is convicted to state to the judge, after conviction, my opinion upon her case,' which I did.

"She was convicted, and Baron Hotham ordered me my expenses, which expenses, I believe, amounted to four guineas and a half. I set off immediately in a post-chaise to give evidence against Broughton. The present Attorney-General was her counsel. Baron Hotham said to me, 'This woman you seem to be well acquainted with?'

"'Yes, my Lord,' said I, 'I am very sorry to say she is a very old offender; but her age, which your lordship has heard her give, and her sex, are the only plea that ought to save her;' for the jury found her guilty of stealing, but not privately, which took away the capital part; therefore she was sentenced to two years' imprisonment in the new gaol in the borough. I then lived in the Strand; two of her relations called upon me, trying to see what could be done, and they would have given me 200*l.* not to have appeared against that woman. She was a very rich woman, and made over all her property before she was convicted; she got the best part of it by plunder.

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"I, it is true, have steered clear, but I do not owe that to any merit myself. I have been lucky enough to have situations where I have been very liberally paid; and whether it has been my own sobriety or attention it matters not; but I have had many gratuities, and from the first people in the nation, or I might have been as liable to temptation as any one in London; but I have a fellow-feeling for other officers, and I must say that I think that some officers deserve every praise, though I do not change ten words with some of them in the course of a week."

It is extraordinary to think that all the incidents familiar from romances, such as "Jack Shepherd," with the informers, spies, "flash-houses," were in full working order at the beginning of the century, and a regular part of the criminal system. Townsend is specially garrulous on the subject of "flash-houses." "The fact is," he tells us, "a thief will never sit amongst honest men, it is not his province to do it, nor would he trust himself with those people; therefore there must be bad houses, because A says to B, I will meet you at such a place to-night. I know, five-and-twenty or six-and-twenty years ago, there were houses where we could pop in, and I have taken three or four, or five and six at a time, and three or four of them have been convicted, and yet the public-house was tolerably orderly too. It has often turned out, that when the information has come to the office, as it

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might be this morning, of a footpad robbery done so-and-so, poor Jealous, and another officer, Macmanus, who was many years in the office, and I have slipped out and gone to some of the flash-houses, and looked about—nobody there; and gone to another, and very likely hit upon the party going to it or in it."

Then, as was his wont, the thief-catcher rambled off on the subject of his own merits:—

"Certainly, the flash-houses can do the officer no harm if he does not make harm of it; if an officer goes there and acts foolishly, and does anything improper, the same as for me to go to-night to all the disreputable houses (I believe I know all of them, but was there ever any one who would say that I went and asked to have a glass of wine, and so on there, and that no money should be asked), what sort of a servant should I be? I ought to be turned out, and never employed in the department of the police again. *Who has been more in confidence than I have been with the youngest part of society of the highest rank?* How often have I gone to such places, there to talk over a little incident that might happen to A.'s son or B.'s son, or my lord this or the other's son? but the consequence was not a morsel of liberty, or how would Townsend act upon those functions of authority, and get what the parties asked me to do; no, he must go there full of power, with great distance towards the owner.

"And as to the poor wretches, in many cases, I

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have been employed to bring their daughters home to their parents, persons of the greatest respect and consequence; we have not found them at one place, but at another; we have taken them home, and there has been an end to it. The respectable young men, however liberally educated, *are often very great fools*, for they often subject themselves to vast inconveniences through their own misconduct, by committing themselves ridiculously, and absurdly getting into scrapes, and what has been the consequence?—the consequence is, 'Townsend, what is to be done?' sometimes with the father, and sometimes with the party himself. But how would this thing be executed if I were to attempt anything like what I stated before? No, I will take upon myself to say, I never drank a glass of wine with those sort of characters, because it will not do; in order to execute my duty properly I must keep them at a proper distance, and it is only a foolish man that would attempt it."

He was then asked whether he thought that the morals and manners of the lower people in the metropolis were better or worse than formerly:—

"I am decidedly of opinion that, with respect to the present time, and the early part of my time, such as 1781, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, where there is one person convicted now, I may say, I am positively convinced there were five then. We never had an execution wherein we did not grace that unfortunate

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gibbet with ten, twelve, to thirteen, sixteen, and twenty, *and forty I once saw twice.* I have them all down at home. I remember, in 1783, when Serjeant Adair was Recorder, there were forty hung at two executions. I agree with George Barrington, whom I brought from Newcastle; and however great Lord Chief Baron Eyre's speech was to him, after he had answered him, it came to this climax—'Now,' says he, 'Townsend, you heard what the Chief Baron said to me; a fine flowery speech, was it not?' 'Yes.' 'But he did not answer the question I put to him.' Now how could he? Now after all that the Chief Baron said to him, after he was acquitted, giving him advice, this word was everything, says he, 'My Lord, I have paid great attention to what you have been stating to me, after my acquittal. I return my sincere thanks to the jury for their goodness; but your Lordship says, you lament very much that a man of my abilities should not turn my abilities to a better use. Now, my Lord, I have only this reply to make—I am ready to go into any service, to work for my living, if your Lordship will but find me a master.' Why, what was the reply to that? 'Gaoler, take the prisoner away.' Why, who would employ him? that was the point. It is really farcical with me sometimes, when I have heard magistrates say, 'Young man, really I am very sorry for you; you are much to be pitied; you should turn your talents

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to a better account; and you should really leave off this bad course of life.' Yes, that is better said than done—for where is there anybody to take these wretches?"

He was next asked did he think any advantages arise from a man being put on a gibbet after his execution? "Yes, I was always of that opinion, and I recommended Sir William Scott to hang the *two men that are hanging down the river.* I will state my reason. We will take for granted that those men were hanged as this morning, for the murder of those revenue officers—they are by law dissected; the sentence is, that afterwards the body is to go to the surgeons for dissection, there is an end of it—it dies. But look at this: there are a couple of men now hanging near the Thames, where all the sailors must come up, and one says to the other, 'Pray, what are those two poor fellows there for?' 'Why,' says another, 'I will go and ask.' They ask. 'Why, those two men are hung and gibbeted for murdering his Majesty's revenue officers.' And so the thing is kept alive. If it was not for this, people would die, and nobody would know anything of it. In Abershaw's case I said to the sheriff, 'The only difficulty in hanging this fellow upon this place is its being so near Lord Spencer's house.' But we went down and pointed out a particular place; he was hung at the particular pitch of the hill where he used to do the

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work. If there was a person ever went to see that man hanging, I am sure there was a hundred thousand."

Some of his recollections as to the pitiless severity of courts in the matter of sentences are curious and interesting; especially what he recalls about highway robberies: "I remember, in very likely a week, there should have been from ten to fifteen highway robberies. We have not had a man committed for a highway robbery lately; I speak of persons on horseback; formerly there were two, three, or four highwaymen, some on Hounslow Heath, some on Wimbledon Common, some on Finchley Common, some on the Romford Road. I have actually come to Bow Street in the morning, and while I have been leaning over the desk, had three or four people come in and say, I was robbed by two highwaymen in such a place; I was robbed by a single highwayman in such a place. People travel now safely by means of the horse-patrole that Sir Richard Ford planned. Where are there highway robberies now? *As I was observing to the Chancellor, when I was up at his house on the Corn Bill;* he said, 'Townsend, I knew you very well so many years ago.' I said, 'Yes, my Lord; I remember your coming first to the bar—first in your plain gown, and then as King's Counsel, and now Chancellor. Now your Lordship sits as Chancellor, and directs the executions on the Recorder's report; but where are the highway rob-

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beries now?' And his Lordship said, 'Yes, I am astonished.'

"There are no footpad robberies or road robberies now, but merely jostling you in the streets. They used to be ready to pop at a man as soon as he let down his glass—that was by bandittis." When asked if he remembered the case of Abershaw, "I had him tucked up where he was; it was through me. I never left a court of justice without having discharged my own feeling as much in favour of the unhappy criminal as I did on the part of the prosecution; and I once applied to Mr. Justice Buller to save two men out of three who were convicted; and on my application we argued a good deal about it. I said, 'My Lord, I have no motive but my duty; the Jury have pronounced them guilty. I have heard your Lordship pronounce sentence of death, and I have now informed you of the different dispositions of the three men. If you choose to execute them all, I have nothing to say about it; but was I you, in the room of being the officer, and you were to tell me what Townsend has told you, I should think it would be for a justification for you to respite those two unhappy men, and hang that one who has been convicted three times before.' The other men never had been convicted before, and the other had been three times convicted; and he very properly did."

But there were graver evils, really caused by the

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system itself. The thief-takers, underpaid, as we have seen, were necessarily uncontrolled in their dealings. Their operations were secret: they were in constant communication with thieves and the companions of thieves, and there was no authority over them save that of the Bow Street magistrate. It was asking for impossibilities that this handful of men should, by their own unaided efforts, discover or bring to justice the criminals of such a metropolis as London, and they were obliged to rely on rather unclean agencies, the practical value of which had been taught and bequeathed to them by Mr. Wild. The most important of these aids was these "*Flash Houses*," or Thieves' Tavern; and they were largely employed as the means of obtaining information about thieves or of seeing them. It can scarcely be credited to what an extent this abuse was tolerated, even so lately as fifty years ago. The officers who frequented these places grew familiar with the faces and figures of the thieves. The magistrates, however, affected to deny the existence of such places, and Sir N. Conant could not be got to admit that such a system was tolerated at all. "I do not know that there are flash houses existing; and if I did, I would, as far as the law enables me, immediately suppress them. If I say the officers look to those places, it implies that those places exist; but I believe they do not exist upon system. I send police officers to every licensing meeting, to give

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evidence against houses that have come to my knowledge, as encouraging a resort of thieves. There is no feeling in Bow Street to nurse such places, either in the magistrates or officers. The police-officers go into them to seek for thieves whom they know are likely to associate at a particular place. A man discharged at the Old Bailey, yesterday, for a robbery, would go the same night to the place where he was last taken into custody."

This evidence was pointed at certain notorious houses which were actually within a few doors of the Bow Street office, and of which more presently.

The "runners," however, were more candid than the magistrates, and frankly owned that it was a valuable agency in their system. Thus Sayer, the officer, declared that he knew such places "perfectly well; I very often go to those flash houses, and find many thieves in most of them."

"Whom you know to be reputed thieves?" "There is no doubt of it."

"The flash houses collect the thieves together. In Sir John Fielding's time there was the 'Blakeney,' in Bow Street, next door to the office; that was a house that men and women used to drink in. We would find a great deal of difficulty, when informations were brought to Bow Street, in being able to apprehend the offenders, unless there were such houses; but when this sort of people use the house in Covent Garden or

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St. Martin's Lane, we should have him at once by merely going there."

Vickery was equally outspoken :—

"I am of opinion that these flash houses tend to facilitate the detection of offenders. I am sure they do; I am well aware they do; but these houses are not now as they were, because they are visited by the officers from time to time, whenever they think fit, without the least molestation or inconvenience; they may go into these houses, look round and see what company there are there, and what they are doing, without any interruption: formerly we could not go into these houses without a magistrate's warrant; and probably if we went to make any inquiries, we should not come off without some insult or molestation; but now it is quite otherwise. I hold myself much above this kind of gentry, and I am always treated with great civility.

"There are a number of houses of that sort frequented by particular bands of thieves. They are attended with this advantage, for they often furnish the means of detecting great offenders: they afford an opportunity to the officers of going round, and knowing the suspicious characters, or of apprehending persons described in advertisements.

"It is desirable that the officers should know there are such houses, for there is a regular correspondence carried on between the thieves of Birmingham, Liver-

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pool, and Manchester, and other places, and the thieves of London."

This familiarity with thieves led, as might be imagined, to another gross scandal, viz. the purchase of immunity or tolerations by bribes to the underpaid officers, and, what was more discreditable, the entering into regular treaties for the compounding of great robberies, when, on restitution of a portion, prosecution was forborne. This practice became rife, being encouraged by the great banking-houses, who were eager to recover their property, or a portion of it, on any terms. Worthy Sir Richard Birnie, however, in 1828, could not bring himself to believe in such practices. But the Committee of 1828 made some extraordinary discoveries. These compromises were generally negotiated by solicitors or police officers, or by both, with the plotters of the robbery, and receivers, or, as they are commonly called, "the putters up" and "fences." These persons usually planned the robbery, found the means, purchased the information necessary, and employed the actual thieves as their agents, themselves running no material risk. These sums have been apportioned, mostly by a percentage, on the value of the property lost; but modified by a reference to the nature of the securities or goods, as to the facility of circulating or disposing of them with profit and safety.

"A great majority of these cases have taken place

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where large depredations have been committed upon country bankers. Two banks, that had severally been robbed of notes to the amount of 4000*l.*, recovered them on payment of 1000*l.* each. In another case, 2200*l.* was restored, out of 3200*l.* stolen, for 230*l.* or 240*l.* In another case, Spanish bonds, nominally worth 2000*l.*, were given back on payment of 100*l.* A sum, not quite amounting to 20,000*l.*, was in one case restored for 1000*l.* In another, where bills had been stolen of 16,000*l.* or 17,000*l.* value, but which were not easily negotiable by the thieves, restitution of 6000*l.* was offered for 300*l.* In another case, 3000*l.* seems to have been restored for 19*l.* per cent. In another case, where the robbery was to the amount of 7000*l.*, and the supposed robbers (most notorious 'putters-up' and 'fences') had been apprehended, and remanded by the magistrate for examination, the prosecution was suddenly desisted from, and the property subsequently restored for a sum not ascertained. In the case of another bank, the sum stolen, being not less than 20,000*l.*, is stated to have been bought of the thieves by a receiver for 200*l.*; and 2800*l.* taken of the legal owners, as the price of restitution. There is proof of more than sixteen banks having sought, by these means, to indemnify themselves for their losses; and that property of various sorts, to a value above 200,000*l.*, has, within a few years, been the subject of negotiation or compromise. They have proof of nearly

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12,000*l.* having been paid to them by bankers only, accompanied with a clearance from every risk, and perfect impunity to their crimes."

It is perhaps not extraordinary that bankers, who have been so repeatedly subject to heavy losses, should take measures to procure indemnity. A highly respectable banker has said before the Committee, "I have no hesitation in mentioning, that at a meeting in our trade, I have heard it said, over and over again, by different individuals, that if they experienced a loss to a serious amount, they should compound." This is by no means considered to be the universal opinion of that respectable body. Another object was, to render the information obtained in one case, available for the prosecution or examination of another, which was effected, when every case passed through the hands of the same solicitor. To him, of course, the active agency and executive proceedings of the society were committed. For the purpose of furthering their objects, means of intercourse, or at least of communication, were sought with notorious "fences," and those who are commonly called "family men." In consequence of the knowledge thus acquired of thieves and their haunts, he has been generally employed by the country bankers upon the loss of parcels, and information obtained from him as to the robbery of coaches, a species of depredation which appears not to be among the objects of prosecution by the society; but which

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has been so common, that a banker's parcel is known by the cant name of "a child." It is not extraordinary, that from such intercourse a belief should have prevailed abroad, that a regular channel was thus established, through which offers might be made and terms negotiated for the restitution of the stolen property of bankers.

The same committee probed this matter to the bottom, and succeeded in obtaining such revelations that they thought it impolitic and dangerous to print the evidence. These negotiations have been frequently carried on by solicitors (few, it is said, in number) of that class whose practice lies chiefly in the defence of culprits, and commonly denominated "Thieves' Attornies."

With respect to the agency of police officers in these transactions, confined to those of the City and of Bow Street, it was notorious that the leading Bow Street officers were deeply concerned in such treaties. But it is amusing to find with what simplicity Sir R. Birnie affects to be ignorant of all such business. Sir R. Birnie admitted himself to have had suspicions formerly, as, when questioned whether in the late cases of parcels being stolen from coaches being restored, he had been able to trace any connection between the police officers and the parties who had lost their property, he replied, "Certainly not; and I will venture to say that in one particular case, where it

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was roundly asserted that it was done through the medium of a police-officer, I have reason to believe that it is untrue." Mr. Halls says, 'I had my suspicions, but I had no knowledge of it; and so far from having any knowledge of it, I had given my mind, if possible, to ascertain the means of acquiring a knowledge of it.' An inquiry was also instituted by the Home Office during the last year, into a compromise, in which an officer was rumoured to have been concerned, without any discovery being made, though every officer in the establishment was sworn and examined. This ignorance could not therefore arise from attention not having been called to the subject.

The Committee were still inclined to believe that, however readily the officers of Bow Street and the City Police have undertaken the negotiations of these compromises, they seem in some instances to have been induced to do it without a corrupt or dishonest motive; and individuals of them have been satisfied with a much less sum for effecting the compromise, than the reward offered for the apprehension of the guilty parties. Suspicion has arisen in one case, that 800*l.* more was received by the officer who negotiated than the thieves asked or received; and in another, 50*l.* was paid to procure restitution of 500*l.*, and neither the 500*l.* nor the 50*l.* were ever restored. In no case, however, does it appear in evidence that any

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one of them stipulated for a reward beforehand; nor connived at the escape of a thief; nor negotiated a compromise, when he possessed any clue that might lead to the detection of the guilty. Your Committee have before adverted to the ignorance in which the magistrates appear to have been kept as to these practices by the officers. It should seem, from the evidence of Sir R. Birnie, that they only supposed a very small number of compromises to have taken place, and those through the medium of attornies. Looking, however, to the regular system and undisturbed security with which the officers acted, it would not be strange if they should have conceived that the magistrates did not disapprove; and entertaining the same opinion as Sir R. Birnie, 'that the magistrates must have means of detecting them,' should have thought them disinclined to interfere, unless some unlucky publicity forced these practices upon their notice."

Sir R. Baker, another magistrate, when asked concerning such compromises, "Would you have considered, if it had come to your knowledge, that it was a crime?" answers, "Not merely the recovery of the goods; if they connived at the escape of the parties, I should say it was a crime, not otherwise." This, it should be remarked, refers to a period previous to 1821, from which year Sir R. Birnie more particularly dates his disbelief of such transactions.

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This practice was a flagrant offence against the law, and the history of the statute 4 Geo. I. c. 11, is given in the words of Mr. Justice Blackstone: "An eighth offence, is that of taking a reward under pretence of helping the owner to his stolen goods. This was a contrivance carried to a great length of villainy in the beginning of the reign of George I., the confederates of the felons thus disposing of stolen goods, at a cheap rate, to the owners themselves, and thereby stifling all further inquiry. The famous Jonathan Wild had under him a well-disciplined corps of thieves, who brought in all their spoils to him, and he kept a sort of public office for restoring them to the owners at half-price: to prevent which audacious practice, to the ruin and in defiance of public justice, it was enacted by stat. 4 Geo. I. c. 11, that 'whoever shall take a reward under the pretence of helping any one to stolen goods, shall suffer as the felon who stole them; unless he causes such principal felon to be apprehended and brought to trial, and also gives evidence against him.' Wild, still continuing in his old practice, was upon this statute at last convicted and executed."

This statute was repealed, and its provisions re-enacted next Session, by stat. 7 and 8 Geo. IV. c. 29. s. 58; but which makes the offence no longer capital, and limits the highest punishment to transportation for life. One officer stated, that his brethren had agreed "to give up all transactions of the sort; as they

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thought some mischief would come of it under Mr. Peel's Act." But it does not appear that this agreement took place till after the inquiry, before alluded to, had been instituted by order of the Home Office. It is extraordinary, say the Committee, in the most innocent way, that the police officers, with the severe Act of Geo. I. in existence, could have considered themselves as committing no crime; and your Committee infers some deficiency in the law, which the statute of last Session may not have completely remedied.

"The Committee was further convinced that the frequency of these seemingly blameless transactions, has led to the organization of a system which undermines the security of all valuable property, which gives police officers a direct interest that robberies to a large amount should not be prevented; and which has established a set of 'putters up' and 'fences,' with means of evading, if not defying the arm of the law; who are wealthy enough, if large rewards are offered for their detection, to double them for their impunity; and who would in one case have given 1000*l.* to get rid of a single witness. Some of these persons ostensibly carry on a trade; one, who had been tried formerly for robbing a coach, afterwards carried on business as a Smithfield drover, and died worth, it is believed, 15,000*l.* One was lately the farmer of one of the greatest Turnpike Trusts in the Metropolis. He was

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formerly tried for receiving the contents of a stolen letter, and as a receiver of tolls, employed by him, was also tried for stealing that very letter, being then a postman, it is not too much to infer, that the possession of these turnpikes is not unserviceable for the purposes of depredation. Another has, it is said, been a surgeon in the army. The two others of the four have no trade, but live like men of property; and one of these, who appears to be the chief of the whole set, is well known on the turf, and is stated, on good grounds, to be worth 30,000*l.* Three of these notorious depredators were let out of custody, as before stated, when there was a fair prospect of identifying and convicting them. It is alarming to have observed how long these persons have successfully carried on their plans of plunder; themselves living in affluence and apparent respectability, bribing confidential servants to betray the transactions of their employers, possessing accurate information as to the means and precautions by which valuable parcels are transmitted; then corrupting others to perpetrate the robberies planned in consequence."

Opposite the Bow Street office was a low tavern called the "Brown Bear," of which more later on; it was a sort of "flash house," the resort of thieves, and a valuable adjunct to Bow Street office. It was patronized by the "runners," as here they were always sure to find any delinquent that was wanted. From this *quasi* connection with the chief office, the

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"Brown Bear" was often made use of as a sort of chapel of ease, owing to the want of accommodation over the way, and officers were allowed to take their prisoners there for the night, when they had arrived too late to attend the office. This was analogous to the practice of keeping debtors in the neutral confinement of the "spunging-house."

A curious picture, which illustrates this system, is furnished by Samuel Bamford, one of the smaller Radical fry in the train of Henry Hunt, during the Manchester plots of 1814 and 1815, and when the spy system was rife. The conspirators had been arrested in the country by two "king's messengers." and were taken up to town in their custody:—

"We arrived in London," says Bamford, in his natural and genuine narrative, "about twelve o'clock, and were immediately conveyed to Bow Street. We were placed in a decent room, our irons were immediately removed, and most of us wrote home to our families. A gentleman named Capper was introduced, and I thought he seemed to scrutinize us very much. Sir Nathaniel Conant, an elderly and respectable-looking gentleman, also came in, and informed us that Lord Sidmouth could not see us that day, and that we should be well provided for at a house in the neighbourhood. Soon afterwards we were conducted in couples to a room prepared at the 'Brown Bear' public-house opposite; where, after supper, the

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doctor amused ourselves and keepers (who were eight or ten police officers) with several recitations in his most florid style. Messrs. Williams and Dykes, the messengers, came and brought with them a friend, and they each seemed much entertained. Mr. Perry, one of the chief officers at Bow Street, afterwards entered and apologized for having to submit us to what might be a small inconvenience. It was customary, he said, to secure prisoners during the night, by a chain, and he hoped we should take it as a mere matter of form; we expressed our readiness to submit to whatever restraint might be deemed necessary. Small chains being produced, myself, Lancashire, and Healey, were fastened together, and the other five were in like manner secured, after which we continued our amusements during an hour or two, and then went to rest on beds in the same room, still secured by chains to the bed-posts, and to each other."

The scenes that followed are worth recalling, as illustrating the summary process by which sedition-mongers were dealt with in these critical days. This system of questioning and examination by the ministers seems to belong to foreign procedure, and reads strangely now.

"About four o'clock p.m. we were conveyed in four coaches to the Secretary of State's office at Whitehall. On our arrival we were divided into two parties of four and four; and each party was placed in a separate room. A gentleman now appeared, who asked seve-

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rally our names and occupations, which he wrote in a book and then retired. In a short time another person came and called my name, and I rose and followed him, along a darkish passage. I must confess that this part of the proceedings gave rise to some feelings of incertitude and curiosity, and brought to my recollection some matters which I had read when a boy, about the inquisition in Spain. My conductor knocked at a door, and was told to go in, which he did; and delivered me to a gentleman, whom I recognized as Sir Nathaniel Conant. He asked my christian and surname, which were given: he then advanced to another door, and desiring me to follow him, he opened it, and bowing to a number of gentlemen seated at a long table covered with green cloth, he repeated my name, and took his place near my left hand. The room was a large one, and grandly furnished, according to my notions of such matters. Two large windows with green blinds and rich curtains, opened upon a richer curtain of nature, some trees which were in beautiful leaf. The chimney-piece was of carved marble, and on the table were many books; and several persons sat there assiduously writing, whilst others fixed attentive looks upon me. I was motioned to advance to the bottom of the table, and did so; and the gentleman who sat at the head of the table said I was brought there by virtue of a warrant issued by him, in consequence of my being suspected of high treason—that I should not be

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examined at that time, but must be committed to close confinement until that day sennight, when I should again be brought up for examination. Meantime, if I had anything to say on my own behalf, or any request to make, I was at liberty to do so; but I must observe, they did not require me to say anything.

"The person who addressed me was a tall, square, and bony figure, upwards of fifty years of age, I should suppose, and with thin and rather grey hair: his forehead was broad and prominent, and from their cavernous orbits looked mild and intelligent eyes. His manner was affable, and much more encouraging to freedom of speech than I had expected. On his left sat a gentleman whom I never made out; and next him again was Sir Samuel Shepherd, the Attorney-General, I think, for the time, who frequently made use of an ear-trumpet. On Lord Sidmouth's right, for such was the gentleman who had been speaking to me, sat a good-looking person in a plum-coloured coat, with a gold ring on the small finger of his left hand, on which he sometimes leaned his head as he eyed me over; this was Lord Castlereagh.

"'My Lord,' I said, addressing the president; 'having been brought from home without a change of linen, I wish to be informed how I shall be provided for in that respect until I can be supplied from home.' The council conferred a short time, and Lord

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Sidmouth said I should be supplied with whatever was necessary.

"'You will be allowed to communicate with your family, said his lordship; 'but I trust you will see the necessity of confining yourselves to matters of a domestic nature. You will always write in the presence of a person who will examine your letters; you will therefore do well to be guarded in your correspondence, as nothing of an improper tendency will be suffered to pass. I speak this for your own good.'

"The other prisoners were then severally called in and informed of the cause of their arrest, in the same terms that I had been; and that they would be again examined on that day sennight. One characteristic incident was, however, said to have occurred before the privy council. On the doctor being asked how he spelled his surname, he answered in broad Lancashire: 'haitch, hay, haa, l, hay, y,' (H, e, a, l, e, y,) but the pronunciation of the e and a being different in London, there was some boggling about reducing the name to writing, and a pen and paper were handed to him. The doctor knew that his *forte* lay not in feats of penmanship any more than in spelling; and to obviate any small embarrassment on that account, he pulled out an old pocket-book, and took from it one of his prescription-labels, on which the figures of a pestle and mortar were imposed from a rudely engraved plate; and these words, 'Joseph Healey, Surgeon, Middleton.

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Plase take——Table Spoonfuls of This Mixture Each ——Hours.' This he handed to Lord Sidmouth, who, as may be supposed, received it graciously, looked it carefully over, smiled, and read it again, and passed it round the council-table. Presently they were all tittering, and the doctor stood quite delighted at finding them such a set of merry gentlemen. The fact was the first blank had been originally filled with a figure of two : 'Plase take 2 Table Spoonfuls,' &c.'"

This "Brown Bear" faced the Bow Street office, and was usually the scene of such arrangements, indeed was a notorious "flash house." The facetious "Joe Munden," whose house had been robbed, came to Bow Street to make his complaint. The magistrates, having heard his story with much interest, he being a public favourite, gave him a friendly piece of advice. "Munden," they said, "you must not tell any one we gave you this advice, but to prosecute will cause you a great deal of trouble and unpleasantness, and you had better put up with the loss." One of the magistrates whispered to an officer and inquired, "Who was on the North Road last night?" "Little Jemmy, with a party, your worship." "Have you ascertained, Munden," rejoined Sir William Parsons, "how the robbers gained an entrance?" "By forcing up the parlour window." "Was there an impression of a very small foot on the mould beneath?" "Yes." "Enough! Should you like to see the leader of the

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gang that robbed your house?" "I have rather a fancy for it," said the astonished comedian. "Then go over to the 'Brown Bear' opposite, at one o'clock to-morrow afternoon; enter the room on the right, and you will see Townsend, the officer, seated at the head of a table with a large company. You may be assured that all the rest are thieves. If he asks you to sit down do so; and the man who sits upon your right hand will be the person who planned and conducted the robbery of your house." With the glee consequent upon a relish for humorous situations, the actor promised compliance. He attended at the appointed time; knocked at the door—was told to enter, and a group of gaol-birds met his eye, headed by Townsend, who was diligently engaged in carving a round of beef. "Mr. Townsend," said the aggrieved child of Thespis, "I wanted to have spoken to you, but I see you are engaged." "Not at all, Mr. Munden; I shall be at your service in a few minutes; but perhaps you will take a snack with us. Jemmy, make way for Mr. Munden." Jemmy, with a wry face, did as he was bid. The actor sat down; turned towards his uneasy neighbour, and examined his features minutely. The company, believing that Jemmy was undergoing the process of identification, laughed immoderately. It happened that a round of beef, with the remnant of a haunch of venison, had formed the repast with which Munden's uninvited

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guests had regaled themselves. The thieves, who were well aware of the burglary, and knew the person of the victim, indulged themselves in extempore and appropriate jokes. "Jemmy, your appetite is failing," said one; "have a little more. You were always fond of boiled beef." Curiosity satisfied, the actor withdrew, greatly to the relief of Mr. Jemmy, to whom he made a low bow at parting. This hero afterwards suffered the last penalty of the law for some offence of greater magnitude. These were the customs that prevailed half a century ago. The officer had the thieves under his immediate eye, and seldom gave them much trouble until they were worth 40*l.*; that is, candidates for the gibbet and the halter. If much stir was made after a *lost* gold watch, and a handsome reward offered, a hint from the man in office recovered it; and when the final period of retributive justice arrived, this functionary fearlessly entered a room crowded with malefactors, and, beckoning with his finger, was followed by his man, who well knew "he was wanted." The "Brown Bear" was as safe a place of retreat for the thief as any other. It is even said that a famous highwayman ensconced himself for some time very snugly in lodgings near it, knowing that search would be made after him in every other direction; as young Watson did in Newgate Street, when every wall was placarded with a large reward for his apprehension.

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A case that made considerable noise at the time, the robbery of the Paisley Bank, when over 20,000*l.* was carried off by two expert housebreakers, who had come down specially for the purpose, was to exhibit the convenience of the "Brown Bear" in a most striking way. This, as will be related later, was the work of the notorious Jemmy Mackcoull, who, with a confederate, carried the scheme through with the most perfect success. He found that it was impossible to get rid of such a mass of notes whose numbers were known. He accordingly determined to enter into treaty with the prosecutors for the restitution of the booty It forms an edifying commentary on the maxim, "Honour among thieves," and migh tbe scenes from the Beggar's Opera.

The prospect of reward made all concerned in the detection very keen and suspicious of each other. "Huffey White," the confederate, was captured on an old charge, at once, and lodged in jail. Sayer, the police officer who was concerned in the business, relates what took place. "Mackcoull," he says, "on the arrival of the burglars in London, was entrusted with the whole of the booty, but only on condition that the following morning he was to place it in the hands of one, William Gibbons, a celebrated pugilist, who, although not a thief himself, was yet well known to the higher order of thieves, and being a man of some property, was frequently trusted with the care

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of plunder; *indeed, so high did he stand in their estimation, that it was believed he could be trusted to any amount.* Mackcoull, however, never intended to let the notes go out of his own possession, and when White and French met him next morning, he told them that Gibbons was out of town, and would not return for some days. In fact, he had already cheated his confederates out of 4000*l.*, for although the notes taken from the bank amounted to 20,000*l.*, the memorandum he had given at Wellwyn stated only 16,000*l.*; so that, from the very first, he never intended to behave fairly." It will be noted that this is in the business-like spirit of Mr. Wild, particularly the happy bit of aphorism underlined.

Mackcoull had himself a narrow escape from being apprehended with White. On entering Tower Street, he caught sight of the officers, and instantly hurried off to the residence of a friend in Swallow Street, whence he despatched a confidential messenger to his wife, with orders that if the officers had not then been in search of him she was to put the whole of the notes into a small trunk, and send them back in a coach with the messenger. Mrs. Mackcoull sent off the notes accordingly, and scarcely had an hour elapsed before the officers arrived, and searched every part of the house, but being unable to discover anything of a suspicious nature, they concluded that the notes might be in the possession of French.

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"Mackcoull, having meanwhile received the whole of the notes, counted over about 6000*l.* worth, which he concealed on his person, and then getting into a hackney-coach, hastened off with the remainder, locked up in a small trunk to Bill Gibbons. Gibbons, however, insisted on the notes being counted over, which was done; the entire sum amounting to 13,800*l.*, which having been made up into a parcel, Gibbons immediately secreted in a back parlour chimney.

"French having in the meantime heard of the apprehension of White, and knowing that nothing but giving up the money taken from the bank could save either White's life or his own, had an interview with Mrs. Mackcoull, and told her he was willing to give up his share of the plunder, begging her at the same time to go to her husband and tell him that he (French) thought it would be best, for the sake of all parties, to endeavour to open a negotiation with the bank upon the subject. This Mrs. Mackcoull promised to do, adding that she had no doubt her husband would agree to the proposal.

"Now, the house at which Gibbons used commonly to smoke his pipe of an evening was the "Brown Bear" in Bow Street, the landlord of which was, at that time, a Mr. Hazard, with whom, as may be readily supposed, Gibbons was on terms of intimacy. Of him Gibbons learnt all the news of the day, and among the rest the robbery of the Paisley Union

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THE BROWN BEAR.

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Bank, and the apprehension of Huffey White. On hearing this Gibbons hastened to Mrs. Mackcoull, and had just time to tell her that he had been at the 'Brown Bear,' when she, suspecting what he had heard, interrupted him by exclaiming, 'Oh, how glad I am to see you, my dear Mr. Gibbons; will you step in and take tea?' and then she went on with a long lamentation about the 'unfortunate affair,' and said she thought that, to save Huffey's life, the notes ought to be returned, proposing that he (Gibbons) should enter into a negotiation, and be paid properly for his trouble. Gibbons assented readily to the suggestion, and on leaving the lady, bent his steps to Bow Street, to break the matter to his friend Hazard, the publican, through whom he intended opening the arrangement with the bank.

"Now, Gibbons, finding that Hazard had heard every detail of the affair from two of the waiters, who had put up at his house, and also from the officers who had been at Scoltock's, unceremoniously proposed to him to break the negotiation to Vickery, the officer. Hazard agreed, and Vickery readily undertook to see the agent for the bank. Gibbons had scarcely reached home, when Mrs. Mackcoull arrived, and told him that her husband was willing to give up the notes, and that, on the following morning, he would put down in writing what he thought ought to be the terms of the treaty.

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"Now, Sayer was an old acquaintance of Mrs. Mackcoull, and Mackcoull therefore fixed on him to conduct the negotiation in the way he wanted. The bank had offered a reward for whatever part of the money might be recovered, and as Sayer was fond of money, there was thus an inducement for him to undertake the job. Mrs. Mackcoull accordingly called upon Sayer, who undertook to make to the bank agent the following proposals:—namely, that, on the money being returned, White and French should be pardoned for escaping from the hulks; that no prosecution should be instituted against any of the parties; and that Mackcoull should not be troubled or molested about any old story of nine years' standing; all which the agent for the bank, thinking he was going to get back his employers' 20,000*l.*, readily agreed to, and the pardon having been obtained for White and French, a time was appointed for the money to be paid over. Accordingly, one evening at ten o'clock, Mrs. Mackcoull waited on the agent for the bank, and, in the presence of Mr. Sayer, produced a small basket, containing, as she said, all the notes that her husband possessed, but which, to the utter amazement both of Sayer and the agent, on being counted over, were found to amount only to 11,941*l.* Of course, the lady affected to know nothing about the remainder, and, of course, also a variety of lies were subsequently told to account for Mackcoull knowing nothing about

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the deficiency, which, I need scarcely add, never made its appearance.

"Shortly after this Mackcoull went out of town for a time, causing his friends to circulate the old report of his having gone to the *West Indies*,—a story so firmly believed by the bank and their agents that they gave up all hopes of ever seeing or hearing any more either of Mackcoull or the remainder of their money."

A police-officer who wrote his recollections of his services, relates the sequel of this strange transaction. According to his story, "Sayer was so dazzled by the splendid booty he had been dealing with, that, so soon as Mackcoull was secured—which he was a long time after—he sought out the woman, his old acquaintance, and lived with her for many years, in Lisle Street, Leicester Square. She was thrown out of a gig and killed. After which, he removed to the neighbourhood of Chelsea, where he expired, at an advanced age, about four years back, worth upwards of thirty thousand pounds. Just before he died he pointed to a closet and the fire, and made motions to convey to the relatives about him, that he wished them to destroy something. They could not comprehend his meaning, and a few minutes after he breathed his last. The old fellow had not long left this sublunary world, when the stolen Glasgow and Paisley notes again made their appearance in circulation. Inquiries were instituted,

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Ruthven was employed, and the principal police-officer of Glasgow, Mr. Miller, came to town, to assist in the investigation, which ended in a man, by trade a copperplate printer, being taken into custody, who, it appeared, was a relative of Sayer's, and had innocently come into the possession of the notes, they being a portion of the property found on the premises at the decease of that officer. Extraordinary means and exertions were adopted to ascertain if any more property could be found; even the garden at Sayer's late residence was dug up for several feet, and a vast number of picklock-keys and housebreaking implements found; but, saving these things, no property of any description was discovered. The copperplate printer was, of course, discharged. The only method of accounting for Sayer's possession of the notes is, that the woman must have had them from Mackcoull, and, from the supposition that they would some time or other become available, had kept them by her; for it is not likely that Sayer had received them from the thieves, either as hush-money or as a portion of the plunder to be restored to the bank. If he had compromised his honesty and honour, by accepting a present from the cracksmen, they undoubtedly would have turned round upon him after their apprehension; and it is not likely that he would have applied them to his own use, instead of returning them, because they were to him quite valueless, and their circulation

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would have been his entire ruin. There is no doubt that when in his dying moments he made an effort to be understood, by pointing to the cupboard and the fire, that he wished them to be burned, for in that identical cupboard the notes were found."

With such temptations it was impossible to prevent "black sheep," as they might be called, bringing discredit on the force. In 1816, ugly rumours got abroad that some of the officers were in the habit of holding out inducements to burglars and others, to carry out their schemes, in the hope of obtaining the reward that was likely to be offered. This system was discovered by mere accident, and it was found that a well-known efficient officer, Vaughan, was concerned in a villainous plot against the lives and liberty of innocent persons. A certain "wooden-legged man," named Drake, had given one of the horse-patrole, whose name was Vaughan, information of a burglary that was about to be committed. Five men were arrested and examined before the magistrates, when it came out that they had been "put up" to the business by Vaughan. On a further examination it appeared from the evidence of the wooden-legged man, that the patrole met him and three others at Sadler's Wells, where the plan of the burglary at Hoxton was arranged for the following night; the patrole first asking whether they could not put him up to a *crack*, by getting some young fellows into the

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thing and informing of it. The wooden-legged man procured three brothers, another man, and a boy, to join him in the burglary on the following night. Next day, he sent a boy to the patrole for some money, who sent him 10*s.*, with word to *lush* them well, and also furnished him with a *jemmy* (a crow), phosphorous bottle, matches, and some pick-lock keys. The wooden-legged man now prevailed on the three brothers to accompany him at night to commit the burglary, telling them it was an easy matter; that he knew there was a box which contained notes and some valuables, also a good *dab* (or bed), and a handsome dial worth 10*l.* When they consented, he informed the patrole, and took the woman to a public-house, to give an opportunity to the others to commit the burglary. He went frequently in and out, whilst another stopped to detain the woman. Edwards, a patrole from Bow Street, lay in wait to detect them.

The wooden-legged man and the parties he had engaged, came to the house. They found the door unlocked, and as the leader refused to go in, the unfortunate men who were intended to be the victims of the project also hesitated; but the signal agreed on with the patrole being given, they all fled. The patrole made an impression with the crow-bar on the lintel of the door, to make it appear to have been forced. The crowbar and dark lantern were deposited in the house, and an alarm given that it was

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robbed. The wooden-legged man now led the patrole and his party to the house where the three brothers lodged, into the pocket of one of whom the patrole, as is stated by his associate, put a ring belonging to the woman of the house.

Another case was discovered in which the patrole had applied to the wooden-legged man to procure some person to commit a burglary, in order that he might share the conviction money. The wooden-legged man was at a loss to find a house, and the patrole recommended to try the house of a *friend* of his own, in Gray's Inn Lane, on which he said the attempt might be conveniently made. The plan being laid, the patrole went to his friend, and told him he had private information that his house would be robbed on the night of the 18th of June, and requested him to keep his dog tied up and quiet in the house, as he and his party should be on the watch and apprehend them. This was agreed to, and the leaders provided their party against night, and encouraged them by telling them the job was easily accomplished and that they would be sure of at least 100*l.* besides a great quantity of articles of value, which they could get, as if given them as a gift. They met at the watering-house at the corner of the King's Road, where they concerted the plan; they then went to the persons with whom they were engaged to commit this burglary; and the patrole, to give them a better

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opportunity, went to the watchman, who was nearly opposite, and told him he was a Bow Street officer, and had information that a burglary was to be committed, and that he and his party were in wait to apprehend them, and he desired the watchman to put out his candle and shut himself up in his box; the watchman refused, saying he would do his duty, but he would not either put out his light or quit his post, and that he would assist to apprehend any persons. Finding himself foiled in this plan, the patrole contrived to give charge of two girls, who were disputing, that whilst they and the watchman were gone to the watch-house the party might make the attempt. One of them came afterwards to the patrole, and said the — *jaffer* is out. He answered, I told you it was to be out of the way. In consequence of this disappointment, however, the attempt was postponed to another night. The patrole waited on the gentlemen of the watch-board, and made a complaint against the watchman, in consequence of which he was suspended.

The watchman, as far as he knew, confirmed the above evidence, he having seen the patrole several times before the door.

"Mr. Nares desired the watchman to call on him, and that he should be paid for the time he was suspended; and the watchman produced a petition, which was signed by several respectable inhabitants of the

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neighbourhood, and which also deposed to his character. He has since been restored."

Once the system was discovered, a number of cases of a similar kind were revealed to the magistrates.

"On another occasion, Mackay saw Vaughan give two bad dollars and four bad shillings to a person named O'Shea, who was to procure an innocent man to buy some article from the mother-in-law of Vaughan, who keeps a chandler's shop in Gray's Inn Lane. A small quantity of good silver was also to be given to him, in order that when he was searched there might appear no excuse for passing the bad money. Mackay afterwards saw O'Shea go into a public-house and shortly return with a poor sailor, whom he directed to go into the shop before mentioned. The sailor did so; O'Shea fled, and immediately the former, having changed some bad money, came out with a loaf. He was instantly seized by Vaughan, who was in waiting, and having secured him and brought him before the magistrate, he was fully committed for trial and convicted."

There were several other cases of an equally atrocious nature mentioned by Mackay, which came within his knowledge by information from and connection with the parties concerned. "On Tuesday night, when Mackay was taken into custody in bed, there was found upon his table a letter addressed to Mr. West-

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wood of the Bank, disclosing all he knew of the circumstances of the present inquiry, and surrendering the names of the criminal parties. The principal actors in the scene as it relates to the coining, we understand to be Pelham, Brock, O'Shea, and Mac-Power. Jefferson and Dickons were, after the examination of Mackay on Thursday, ordered to appear before the magistrates.

"G. Browne, Mackay, and Drake are now in custody: Hubbard is also in Horsemonger Lane." These were all well-known officers. It was melancholy to find also that the trusty and resolute Ruthven was also implicated; he was, however, released upon bail. But Vaughan, the chief delinquent, had as yet escaped arrest and was in hiding. But he was presently captured.

"Soon after (in July, 1816), a man came to the office and inquired for Bishop, the officer. The officer, being out upon business, he told the magistrate he knew where Vaughan, the late patrole, was concealed. The magistrate sent the information to Limbrick and Read, the officers belonging to Hatton Garden office, who were originally the cause of discovering this man to have been guilty, that they might have the credit of apprehending him again. Limbrick and Read went on Friday morning, and having procured the assistance of Freeman, the officer, belonging to Whitechapel Road, understanding that Vaughan was armed, they pro-

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ceeded to Whitechapel Road, and entered a house kept by Vaughan's uncle, where they found him in a parlour, and two loaded pistols upon him. Having secured him, they brought him to the office, where they arrived about three o'clock, when he underwent an examination before Mr. Nares.

"Limbrick and Read produced the pistols, and a pocket-book which they found upon him. There were papers and memorandums in the book which throw considerable light, and tend to confirm a great deal respecting him, so that he who has been exercising a considerable portion of cunning to entrap others, had not cunning enough to put out of the way those documents which will tend to convict himself.

"He denied having run away from his regular residence, or that he was living in concealment at his uncle's house; but stated that the reason of his going to live there was, it was not convenient for him to sleep at home on account of his wife having lately been brought to bed. He considered himself not bound to appear till next sessions, at which time he had given bail to answer charges that might be brought against him, and in consequence of what had been said in public and private respecting his conduct, he did not consider himself safe in walking the streets. He denied what had been said against him to be true, but asserted that there was a conspiracy against him.

"Dickons, one of the patrole, who used to act with

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him in the employ of the Bank of England in detecting the utterers of counterfeit tokens, was present, and much abuse passed between them. On Thursday it was ascertained that Dickons complained of having been classed with Vaughan, and it having been insinuated that he was concerned with him in his malpractices, he was told he ought to find Vaughan to clear himself, and Adkins, the officer, offered to give him a guinea if he would apprehend him; he set off, taking another patrole with him, but saying he did not like to go to take him without a warrant as he knew he was armed, although he confessed he was not afraid of him. In the course of the investigation it was ascertained that Dickons had met Vaughan since he had been wanted, and had advised him to run away to France. Dickons was ordered into custody till he produced the necessary bail.

"Vaughan was committed as an accessory before the fact in breaking open the house of Mrs. M'Donald in Hoxton, which was the circumstance that led to the discovery of these transactions."

Charges of another description were also made against the Bow Street officers. One of an odd, and perhaps of a rather unhandsome kind, was made by one of the foreign consuls against the patrole.

"Mr. Halls, the Hanoverian Consul, wrote to complain to Sir R. Birnie, a few days ago, that persons professing to belong to the Bow Street patrole had called at his house and asked for presents by the way

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of Christmas boxes, and wishing to know if such a practice was sanctioned by the magistrates. Sir R. Birnie stated that such a practice, so far from being sanctioned, was strictly prohibited, and any officer known to have asked such a thing would be dismissed from his situation. Sir Richard subsequently learned that Francis Holyland, the conductor of the Bedford Square division of night-patrole, was the officer who had called at Mr. Halls' and other houses to collect Christmas boxes, and on Tuesday morning he ordered that officer to come before him, and asked how it was that he had presumed to act in defiance of a known rule which was laid down, and always rigorously enforced by the magistrates? Holyland said he was extremely sorry, but he assured Sir Richard that it was done in ignorance, and that the moment he discovered he was wrong he discontinued it. Sir R. Birnie—"Sir, you called upon the Hanoverian Consul with a printed paper beginning 'We, the undersigned,' and at the head of the list appeared your name. You must have known, and I am sure did know, that such a practice was contrary to the orders of the magistrates, and you are suspended from your office."

Bond, another Bow Street officer, who was well-known from his connection with Drury Lane Theatre, often found himself distracted by the conflicting duties required of him by the managers and the public. Thus he was one day addressed by "Sir Richard," who told him that he had heard several complaints respecting

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the want of due attention on the part of those officers who should attend the different entrances to the pit and boxes, to protect the public from the depredations of thieves. The officers appointed to that duty at Drury Lane, instead of rendering the public their protection and assistance, were placed as watchers over the checktakers, a duty which it was never intended they should perform, and which he (Sir R. Birnie) had determined to put a stop to. A magistrate had just informed him that he had been robbed of his watch, chain, and seals, at the box-entrance, on Monday evening, a circumstance which could not have occurred if the police-officers had been at their posts.

Bond, in reply, said he would lose no time in communicating with his son on the subject. He added that when he was at the theatre, attempts had been made to place the officers under his directions over the door-keepers and checktakers, and Mr. Winston, a gentleman connected with the management, had more than once told him that the public might take care of themselves, and that the police were at the disposal of the managers, whose interests they were bound, in the first instance, to protect.

Some ingenious knaves even occasionally took advantage of the special dress of the officers to assume their duties, and with some success. "For the last ten days a new and successful mode of plunder has been carried on in the neighbourhood of London by two or

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three fellows who pretend to belong to the Bow Street patrole, and who are dressed in red waistcoats, and produce constables' staves. The plan of these villains appears to be perfectly arranged. They pretend to come in search of a suspected character, or to look for stolen and contraband goods. Easy access is found by assuming the authority of police-officers, and upon being shown through the different apartments, they never fail to carry away whatever is valuable and portable that comes within their reach. A few evenings since, about ten o'clock, they went to the "Red Lion" public-house, near Wimbledon Common. The landlord was not at home, and they proceeded to search the house for an ideal suspicious character; in doing so they contrived to carry off from the different apartments property to a considerable amount. The same night they went to a tradesman's house in the neighbourhood, and, he being from home, they searched the house under pretence of looking for stolen goods."

Many anecdotes used to be current as to the stupidity of the old watchman or Charlie; but the complaints periodically made at the office show that their ignorance exceeded the common belief. On the other hand the constant battering and ill-usage received could not be expected to improve their discrimination.

Thus we find that Courteney, a watchman of the Strand, brought a man before the magistrates for

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smoking a cigar in the street! The accused had been locked up nearly twelve hours for this *offence*. It is almost unnecessary to say that the man was instantly discharged, and the watchman received from the magistrates an admonition for his misconduct.

And again: On Wednesday night, Sands, a watchman of the Savoy, Strand, took Mr. Crosbie, the officiating clergyman of Sydenham, into custody for talking to a person in the street, and refusing to "move on" when *ordered* so to do. The gentleman was obliged to leave his watch and seals as a security for his appearance at this office the next day, where he accordingly came; and Sir R. Birnie, after hearing the case, ordered Sands to be suspended from acting in future.

On another occasion, two young men were brought up by one of the guardians of the night on a charge of disorderly conduct. The young men said in their defence that they were returning home through Drury Lane, when a chimney-sweep snatched the hat off one of them and ran away. They called to the watchman, but he refused to go after the offender, because it was a different parish. Sir R. Birnie severely reprimanded the watchman. The idea of making a distinction of parishes in such a case was mere nonsense. The watchmen were always ready enough to bring ridiculous charges, like the present, to the office; but he never found one of them bringing a criminal

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charge. Their conduct, in this instance, was outrageous. The defendants were then dismissed.

§ *Amateur Police.*

A curious practice connected with the general police system, and which came out before the various committees, was that the constables in Westminster and in most of the outlying districts were requisitioned inhabitants, who had to perform the duties without pay, or, indeed, good will, or else by substitute, the latter being glad to undertake the office for a trifling remuneration. At Westminster there was a quaint, old-fashioned system in vogue up to the time of the establishment of the new police. The burgesses elected a court of their own, called a "Leet," which was presided over by the Dean and High Steward. This leet selected about eighty tradesmen of the district, always with the odd exception of the licensed victuallers. These persons were named to do the duties of constable in the district, and, it would appear for the most part, performed the duties—or undertook to perform them—in a sort of halting fashion, some coming on duty every fifteenth night, "unless otherwise engaged." A system of substitutes was, of course, encouraged, and some eight or ten men were ready, for a sum of from eight to twenty pounds, to undertake the duties. This number really represents the acting watch of the district. Deplorable

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accounts were given of the class of person thus appointed—paupers from the workhouses being often selected, and the others aged, worn-out creatures, picked up "anyhow and everyhow." This was to be expected, as in some districts the remuneration was no more than 1*s.* 6*d.* a night, or perhaps 2*s.* 6*d.* for an "odd job." It was confessed, however, that this was eked out by a practice of "compounding charges at the watch-house." Much ridicule of the "Charlies'" inefficiency might have been spared, for, with such a system and such materials, what could have been expected.

Acting with these wretched guardians of the peace, we find our old friend "THE BEADLE," flourishing all over London to an extraordinary degree. There were over fifty of these officials, among whose duties was that of "setting the watch," and, in some cases, of going round through the night and seeing that the watch were at their posts. These men had from 60*l.* to 70*l.* a year. In a few cases, however, the office was taken quite *au sérieux* by conscientious inhabitants; but they paid dearly for their sincerity. Thus, in the year 1828 an active young tradesman in the Bow Street district was appointed parish constable of St. Paul's. Struck with the disorders of Covent Garden and the helplessness of the police, he determined, instead of hiring a substitute, to perform the duties himself. It is instructive to find what was the fate of

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his well-meant efforts, and how he was treated, not by the rogues and disorderly characters, but by the authorities, who did not relish his intrusion.

When he took up his office he found Covent Garden at midnight a regular pandemonium, though Charles Lamb, who lived there about the same time and in the same scenes, was delighted with the racket. "There were thieves and 'night-coaches,' 'cads' who attended the night-coaches, coffee-houses being open to a very late hour, and public-houses also, a number of the worst of characters, which scarcely deserve the name of men, that I have every reason to believe were of the most infamous description. By-night coaches I mean a number of coaches that ply upon the stand to take night-fares. I made it my duty to make particular inquiry with a view to get rid of that nuisance. I spoke first to Sir Richard Birnie upon the subject, and he said, 'Give them regular notice to leave the stand, and if, after midnight, any of those coaches should be found plying, I shall send a body of officers sufficient to take the whole to the green-yard.' This notice I served at the watering-house attached to that stand. I afterwards, fearful of committing myself, went to Mr. James Quaife, one of the principals of the hackney-coach office, and he said that Sir Richard Birnie had no such power; that the hackney-coaches had a right to stand where they pleased, and at what time they pleased; that they might form a line in any street

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whatever. This was contrary to what I had heard before.

"My experience was strengthened by the injury that I myself, as a housekeeper, sustained by the noise and disorder. I was anxious, like other housekeepers, to make the most of my lodgings; and whenever I had got respectable gentlemen into my house, I could not retain them, from the noises at night, occasioned by those men who were, to use a familiar term, sky-larking and repairing the coaches, taking off the wheels and hammering and clanking; and sometimes they would have the girls in the coaches and upon the boxes, and riding up and down. These coaches were made any use of by thieves for the conveyance of stolen goods; of it I have no doubt. I made myself as active as I could, because I started with the intention to see how far the powers of a constable would go towards doing it, because I perceived, as everybody else does, a wonderful apathy in the police-officers; and it was mortifying to see a party of officers standing at one end of the street and, night after night, a throng of well-known thieves congregating at the other end of the street, and no steps taken to remove them. I am speaking of officers attached to Bow Street, and of that class of officers. Before I was constable, and since I have been constable, I have seen gentlemen, for instance, leaving the portico of the theatre with a lady having hold of each arm. His pockets have been

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defenceless, as it were, and I have seen the thieves follow him in the most audacious manner and dip their hands in his pockets, and take handkerchiefs and snuff-boxes, or anything else. I have seized them repeatedly."

The professional officers soon found an opportunity of "doing him a turn," as they called it.

"I had to contend with innumerable difficulties," he says. "I saw a marked spirit of envy, and a determination to do me all the injury they possibly could; as if I were undertaking something I had no business to interfere with. I consider they acted as men conscious that every conviction I carried to Bow Street was a tacit reproach upon them for not doing their duty. I repeatedly heard of threats made behind my back, and those threats, in one instance, were carried into execution. While I was clearing the avenue in front of Drury Lane Theatre—having previously consulted Sir Richard Birnie, and having had from Sir Richard Birnie the promise of assistance and support—while I was doing that, I was seized by Bond and Nettleton, two of the deputed officers attached to Drury Lane Theatre, and I was struck and dragged through the streets like a felon. Sir Richard Birnie, either from some false impression, or from some feeling I could not well decipher, chose to dismiss the complaint without hearing the case gone into, treating it as a squabble between

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officers. They charged me with striking them, which was as false as God is true. To show the malice with which they treated me, they wanted to drag me to St. Martin's watch-house. They threatened the constable of the night that if he did not take charge of me they would take me to St. Martin's watch-house. Having given charge of me, of course they made their complaint. And that complaint was dismissed instantly."

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CHAPTER VI.

OFFICE ECCENTRICITIES.

§ *Sir Richard Birnie*

The court at Bow Street was always, in spite of attempts at alteration and rearrangement, a poor, straitened place, whose accommodation was miserably inadequate to the important work that was despatched there. We can see what it was from the picture that adorns the adventures of "Tom and Jerry," where it appears to be no more than a large room, though it is a place of more pretension in the plate given in Akerman's "Microcosm of London." On great days, in our time, when the "Slade Case," for instance, was going on, the shifts to find room for the witnesses, counsel, &c., were of pitiable kind, and the atmosphere of the ill-ventilated and crowded place was scarcely enjoyable. Yet here the patient Bow Street magistrate carried out his complicated functions, on a small salary and under many difficulties. At the beginning of the century, the total outlay for the maintenance of the office, its staff and detectives, and police officers, including the salaries of the magistrates, did not reach an annual sum of 8000*l*. From the

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year 1792, when seven offices were established, their united cost was no more than 18,000*l.*, each of the subsidiary offices was allowed but 2000*l.* a year; while the total outlay for administration and the detection of crime was only 26,000*l.* It was wonderful that with a system thus "starved," such results were obtained; and these were mainly owing to the energy and spirit and personal exertions of the Bow Street magistrates themselves. Thus unselfishness has always distinguished the officers of the country, who show themselves eager to supplement what the system fails in, by their own labour. From his peculiar position and duties, the magistrate at Bow Street generally developed qualities and characteristics of a special kind and suited to his position. He had, as we have seen, to act as "thief-taker," direct the pursuit of criminals, as well as to deal with them, and be in perpetual conflict and contact with the disorderly classes. To Bow Street every kind of case, some of the most strange kind, found its way; and as the proceedings were drawn out, there was generally found something startling or dramatic to enliven the cases. The magistrate's wits became as it were sharpened, and his experience, as may be conceived, was of the most varied description. Hence there were to be seen, and are to this hour seen, little dramas of an amusing, an exciting kind, for what was at stake was of a serious description—often life or liberty, and on the preparatory struggle at this stage, the criminal's safety depended.

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One of the most prominent of the later magistrates, and whose name was most familiar to the public, was Mr., afterwards Sir Richard, Birnie, under whose auspices, as we shall see, many diverting scenes were furnished for the amusement of the public. The story of his rise shows that he was a remarkable character in his way, and must have possessed a singular resolution. The son of a saddler, he came to London from Banff, where he was born, a poor unfriended Scotch lad, with hardly "a saxpence" in his pocket.

On the ground where the Union Club now stands formerly stood a tavern, known as the Cannon Coffee House, which was at the end of a street known as Hedge Lane, but later as Whitcomb Street. Here he was glad to find lodging in an attic in a mean house. The floor below was occupied by a thrifty barber, who one day observed the lad following a coal-cart and picking up the lumps of coal which fell from it, which he carefully brought home to his garret. He was so delighted with this sign of a provident spirit that he determined on the spot that he should be his heir and son. By a lucky chance the boy obtained employment with the firm of Mackintosh, who supplied the Royal Family with harness, &c.; and being once despatched to wait on the Regent, H.R.H. was so pleased with his style and manners, that he required that the same agent should for the future always wait on him. This "taking fancies" was a peculiarity of the Regent's. Birnie soon became foreman, then

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partner, and, it is said, married the daughter of his first patron, the barber.[1] He presently exhibited a serious fancy for parochial work, taking a deep interest in the smaller official life. Indeed, he used to boast that he had filled every office in the parish, save that of watchman and beadle. Such zeal was encouraged, and at the request of a duke he was made a magistrate; when he could indulge his taste with greater facility, and was to be seen constantly at Bow Street, following the cases. On a few occasions he took the magistrate's place. He was presently appointed to Union Hall Court, and later to Bow Street, and devoted himself to the duties of his post with a peculiar *goût*. He was an energetic and courageous magistrate, and these qualities he displayed with a signal effect on several notable occasions. It was he who planned the perilous enterprise of the arrest of Thistlewood and his gang, which was attended by loss of life. He led on the party fearlessly, "the balls," as it was described, "whistling about his head." In the riots connected with the Queen's funeral in the following year he showed similar intrepidity in confronting an excited mob, and when one of the magistrates shrank from reading the Riot Act, he undertook the duty.

On the bench, in the exercise of his duties, he displayed good sense and sagacity, exercising a wholesome severity, tempered by a certain good-humour. This, in

[1] Richardson's "Recollections."

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process of time, was developed into a sort of freedom, or even buffoonery, which entertained the public; and displays of jocoseness and "scenes" began to be regularly looked for when "Sir Richard" was on the bench. Some of these were often dramatic, and formed a contrast to those grimly tragic episodes of which the office was too often the scene. Occasionally, Sir Richard's freedoms exposed him to unpleasant scenes. The familiar magistrate expects every one to receive his utterances in an obsequious spirit, and when he meets resistance becomes intemperate. A scene of this kind arose in connection with a cab-fare, the sum in dispute being one shilling. After an adjournment, Mr. Miller, a barrister, said he attended on behalf of Mr. Jay, by whom he had been instructed to resist the demand. The original summons was dismissed on account of some technical defect.

Sir Richard: I remember all that very well, sir. I could not convict on the first summons because of some clerical error. The coachman is entitled to his expenses.

Mr. Miller: I submit not: the party who obtains a dismissal on such a ground is never saddled with costs.

Sir Richard: I say the coachman is entitled to his expenses if the distance he goes for be correct; and more I say, he shall have them, too.

Mr. Miller: I must protest against this. The point

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for your determination is of great public importance, and demands deliberation before it is decided.

Sir Richard: Am I not deliberate? I say he shall have his expenses.

Mr. Miller: You sit there to administer the law as it is, and I contend that such a decision is wholly unwarranted. Was not one shilling put into your hand, coachman?

Complainant: Yes, but I would not accept it.

Mr. Miller: That is immaterial: the tender was a legal due, and got rid of all cause of complaint.

Sir Richard: Stuff and nonsense; was ever anything so pitiful? Make out the order, Mr. Woods, for the payment of the shilling, and costs of the present summons.

Mr. Miller; As counsel, I am bound to offer every argument that suggests itself to me.

Sir Richard: Yes, I know you are paid for talking, and must earn your fee. The public business cannot stand still. Call on another case.

Mr. Miller: I must say that such conduct on your part justifies the opinion which is everywhere in circulation respecting your administration of the law.

Sir Richard: You had better restrain yourself, sir.

Mr. Miller: In addition, I have to thank you for your polite attention, and the epithets of "stuff and nonsense" applied to me.

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Sir Richard: You mistake. I meant these to apply to your defence, and not to you.

Mr. Miller: I shall certainly never appear before this tribunal again until some more courteous and gentlemanlike person presides over it.

Sir Richard: With all my heart. I did not send for you now, much less want you.

Mr. Miller: This conduct of yours shall not be forgotten; I shall see if it can be used in a higher quarter; (saying which, Mr. Miller left the office, leaving the matter to be finally adjusted by his Worship, who made the order, which was refused to be complied with by the defendant).

This was not very edifying. In fact, during the later portion of his life, Sir Richard displayed a rather testy, not to say eccentric disposition, which exposed him to the free comments of a hostile press. On one occasion, in 1828, an unseemly scene took place between him and some of the parishioners of Covent Garden, in reference to the election of Overseers.

"On Tuesday last, a Petty Session was held at St. Paul's, Covent Garden, for the appointment of Overseers. Mr. Dow was called to the chair by the parishioners, who had prepared a list of eight householders. The late Select Vestry had prepared a private list of their own, without consulting the parishioners. On Sir Richard Birnie and Mr. Hall entering the room, the former demanded of Mr. Dow

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who he was. Mr. Dow gave his name, and expressed his readiness to resign the chair to Sir Richard. The worthy magistrate, however, seized him by the arm (*which, having been dislocated, was in a sling*), and said, "*Get out, sir, get out!*"

Mr. Dow: Gently, Sir Richard, you do not consider my arm; you give me great pain.

Sir Richard: I care nothing about your arm.

The Magistrate then called for the list of the "Select," and was proceeding to call from it, when his attention was requested to the list sanctioned by the parishioners.

Sir Richard: I know nothing about any lists.

Mr. Corder wished to explain.

Sir Richard: I'll hear no explanation.

A parishioner happening to express a wish not to detain the magistrates, as their official duties would oblige them to attend at Bow Street, Sir Richard interrupted him with "*Obliged*, sir! I am not *obliged* to attend. How dare you, sir, presume that I am *obliged?* I can stay away all day if I like."

Mr. Dow emphatically remonstrated with Sir Richard Birnie on his conduct, which he declared to be unmanly and ungentlemanly, adding, "You have treated me like a dog."

Sir Richard ordered Mr. Roche to take down Mr. Dow's words, upon which the latter repeated them. The meeting separated under strong feelings of dissatisfaction."

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§ "*Dick Martin.*"

A frequent performer in this way was Mr. Richard or "Dick" Martin, M.P. for Galway, whose protection of animals, exhibited in the most eccentric and fanatical fashion, was set off by his natural readiness to take offence, and thus exhibit "cruelty to animals" in the case of his own species. "Martin's Act" was the result of his exertions, and the author was the most forward to enforce its provisions. He was accordingly constantly dragging some groom or driver before Sir R. Birnie or Mr. Minshull, who treated his oddities with good-humoured indulgence. These scenes were very entertaining, and the reporters took care to give his opinions with literal accuracy.

It was thus that in August, 1823, he summoned a waggoner in the service of Messrs. Fitch and Sons, market-gardeners, for "wantonly and cruelly" beating a horse.

"Mr. Martin proceeded *in his usual animated manner* to state that on Monday se'nnight, as he was approaching Covent Garden market in his gig, he heard the loud smacking of a whip, and he found the defendant flogging a horse with all his strength, and in the most wanton and cruel manner. The unfortunate animal was not in a team—he was not at work at all, but was tied up by the head to another waggon, and it was therefore quite improbable that the animal had given any provocation for the beating he had got; indeed, he

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(Mr. Martin) was prepared to say upon his solemn oath, that he believed there was no necessity whatever for beating the horse in the manner described. There was another circumstance of this case which he was extremely sorry to be obliged to relate, and that was, that a person of the decent and respectable appearance and manners of him who now stood by the side of the waggoner (pointing to Mr. Fitch), should have sanctioned such cruelty. While he (Mr. Martin) was talking to the waggoner, Mr. Fitch came up and said that he had ordered his man to flog the horse, and that he deserved it, adding that the horse had a sore wither, and had set up kicking at a violent rate, and it was necessary to beat him well.

Mr. Fitch here requested to be heard, upon which,

Mr. Martin said, "*O, man alive, that will never do!* I accuse you as well as your man."

Mr. Minshull: I don't know that Mr. Fitch is not an admissible witness on behalf of his servant.

Mr. Martin: But I do, though. *Sure I charge them both.*

Mr. Fitch, without being sworn, stated that the horse in question had been kicking incessantly for more than half an hour before. The horse was irritated by the rubbing of the collar-chain against a sore place on his wither.

Mr. Minshull: What was your object in whipping him?

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Mr. Fitch: Why, sir, to make him stand still.

Here Mr Martin broke out in characteristic style, "Ha, ha! that's very good, and reminds me of an anecdote exactly bearing upon this case. A French financier under the *ancien régime* had, among his stud, a horse which had a knack of devouring another horse's corn as well as his own; and in order to put a stop to a practice so injurious both to the robber and the robbed, he ordered execution of death to be put in force upon the offender, and the horse (a beautiful animal by the bye) was shot. But, egad, the financier found that this execution had very little effect in the way of example, for other thievishly-inclined horses still robbed their neighbours, and his friends told him he might shoot the whole stud before he cured the evil; so he ordered no more executions." (A loud laugh followed the relation of this anecdote.)

Mr. Minshull said the words of the act were "wantonly and cruelly," and was Mr. Martin prepared to say that this defendant had acted "wantonly and cruelly"?

Mr. Martin, with much warmth, said he had most undoubtedly. He had said before, and he now repeated it, that upon his oath the man acted wantonly and cruelly. The animal was tied up and perfectly quiet. If he was not convicted, all previous convictions under this act were unjust, and all magistrates who had decided against persons accused under this popular statute had transgressed the law.

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Mr. Minshull said it was very difficult to define the degree of chastisement which this act contemplated in the term "cruelty."

Mr. Martin said this was precisely the line of argument adopted by the advocates of cruelty—the opposers of his bill—he meant Mr. Brougham among others; and his (Mr. Martin's) answer, and the answer of Lord Londonderry and others too, was, that cruelty was to be defined according to received notions of it. Now he declared that this man acted wantonly and cruelly; and he had been used to horses for thirty years, and he would moreover call his groom, who would declare the same opinion.

The groom was then called, and said he thought the horse cruelly and unnecessarily beaten.

Sir R. Birnie: But was this beating necessary? I think a man must be permitted to exercise his own judgment as to the extent of chastisement he may inflict upon his horse.

Mr. Martin: Oh, by G—, if a man is to be the judge in his own case, there's an end of everything.

Sir R. Birnie: I must fine you 5*s.* for swearing.

Mr. Martin: I am sworn already.

Mr. Minshull: Yes, but you have just sworn an unnecessary oath.

Mr. Martin (taking out his purse): Well, I'll pay.

Sir R. Birnie (smiling): No, I will not enforce it this time. I was joking only.

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Mr. Martin again very earnestly pressed for a conviction, and said that if a man flogged his apprentice with unnecessary severity, he must not be allowed to be the judge whether or not he had acted with cruelty. That must depend upon the cool, unbiassed judgment of others.

Mr. Minshull: Was the man out of temper?

Mr. Martin: Quite infuriated."

All this was highly amusing and entertaining to the audience. But these indulged *farceurs* are often inclined to abuse their privilege and turn on those who tolerate their antics. Thus, when the owner of the animal proceeded to urge that a horse was sagacious and understood what he was beaten for,

Mr. Martin replied: "Nonsense, man. As well might you beat a horse to-day for kicking this day week. I tell you what you should do to make a horse good and obedient! just go whisper in his ear, "You are a good horse, and I am a bad man," and I engage he will be as quiet as a lamb!

The Magistrate again expressed an opinion that a man must be allowed to exercise his own judgment, whereupon

Mr. Martin, with an energy of manner which beggars description, exclaimed, "Time has been that when the brains were out, the man would die;" and at the same time sprang from his seat upon the bench, and throwing down a bar which is placed to keep off the

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people, seemed about to leave the office, but paused a moment, and returned in great agitation to the bench.

Mr. Minshull: My brains may be out now, and I still live; but I shall act upon my own judgment as far as it goes, and I cannot make up my mind to convict in this case.

Mr. Martin: Then I tell you that it is high time you were relieved from the labours of your office.

Mr. Minshull: That was a very kind and gentlemanly remark certainly, Mr. Martin; but I will keep my temper, whatever you may do. I dismiss the case.

Mr. Martin, during the last two or three minutes that he remained, moved to and from the bench and the body of the office with great rapidity; and at length snatched up his hat, hurried out, observing as he went, that he would apply for pardon for all who had ever been convicted under this statute."

In 1825 we find this singular person engaged in conflict with the proprietors of *Blackwood's Magazine* and the *Morning Chronicle*, who had ridiculed not so much his philanthropic exertions, as the eccentric and tyrannous method by which he tried to enforce his views.

"Mr. Martin addressed Sir Richard Birnie, complaining of the repeated attacks made in the *Morning Chronicle* upon him, for his endeavours to put a stop to the ill-treatment of animals; more particularly for an article quoted in that paper from *Blackwood's*

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Magazine, which the hon. legislator asserted aimed at his life—inasmuch as it was asked plainly and undisguisedly, "Why don't you kill him?"—"Thus," said Mr. M., "this paper not only disseminates the most barefaced libels upon the motives of my exertions in the cause of humanity, but actually solicits any one to knock me on the head, as he would a bullock."

Sir Richard said, "Pray, Mr. Martin, may that not mean the ox, and not you?"—to which Mr. M. replied, he was satisfied it clearly meant himself. "Look," said he, "to the daily attacks which are made upon me. It was but a short time since, under an article of Police, they headed it, 'Mr. Martin and *another* unfortunate ass;' *and who could that mean but me?*"

On friday, Mr. V. Dowling attended as the representative of Mr. Clement. Mr. Adolphus was counsel for the defence.

The paragraph thus commenced:—"Blackwood and Martin. It is well for the former that a considerable interval separates him from Mr. Martin, otherwise we think his friends might be in some apprehension for him. Our hair absolutely stood on end when we read the following attack in the last number." Then follows the quotation from *Blackwood*, beginning, "That Irish Jack-ass, Martin, &c."

Mr. Adolphus, an adroit advocate, then proceeded to deal with the case, and, it will be seen, inflamed the

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"animals' friend" almost to fury. He said that Martin swore that he believed the intention of the journalist was to incite people to murder him! He was astonished at such swearing! If a man was to swear so from ignorance he should pity his intellect—if from malice, he would say, God forgive him!—and he would say so in common charity, for such a man would have much more to answer for than the miserable brutes for which he affected to feel so much compassion! As to the "angry gabble," it was known to all who read the papers of the day that there was a person in the habit of going about to the different police-offices, disgusting everybody with his angry and vulgar gabble; loading every *poor* wretch with such epithets as "savage scoundrel," "atrocious wretch," "ruffianly miscreant," and others equally violent. If he stopped there, perhaps there would be no great harm; but when that man could deliberately swear that he saw an animal beaten with a bludgeon, which afterwards turned out to be a switch—(*Mr. Martin*: A switch!)—yes, a switch—when he could magnify a switch into a bludgeon, and that too on his solemn oath—he (Mr. A.) could not, he would not trust himself to express his opinion of him; and when such a man as that came forward with a charge like the present, it ought to be received with great caution indeed.—The paragraph quoted from *Blackwood* began: "*That Irish Jackass, Martin.*" Now, whether the writer called him

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Dick-ass or Jack-ass, it was much the same. It was well known that in Essex, and some other counties, it was as common to say Dick-ass as Jack-ass, and therefore either would apply. He should like to know, indeed, if the ass was not the most libelled of the two. There was one ass that spoke but once, and never told a lie. Was that the case with Mr. Martin? He was afraid not. Mr. Adolphus, after continuing in the same strain for some time, returned to the subject of the affidavit. He would now call evidence to show that Mr. Martin's declaration here upon oath, and his assertions elsewhere, were totally at variance; and that so far from feeling any fear, he had gone even into the lion's den, the office of the *Chronicle*, a few hours after he had sworn the affidavit, and said, "Well, what's going on? What's doing? This is all nuts to me—itbrings me into popularity—I like all this sort of thing." And yet to-day he has the audacity to come forward and support that most improper affidavit.

Mr. Martin here threw himself across the table as far as he could reach, and exclaimed,—

"*You scoundrel, how dare you say it is an improper affidavit!*"

Mr. Minshull: Really, Mr. Martin, I am quite astonished. I must hold you to bail, sir.

Sir Richard Birnie: Mr. Martin, you have said you are a magistrate—pray pay some respect to the bench here, whatever may be the custom in Ireland.

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Mr. Minshull said he had heard sufficient to authorize him to call upon Clement to give bail, himself in 200*l.*, and two sureties in 100*l.* each.

At the next hearing Mr. Martin appeared in person, and the affair ended harmoniously. With regard to *Blackwood's Magazine* he considered it to be the parent root which had sent forth the many branches of libels that appeared in the *Morning Chronicle* against him. He next proceeded to notice the long statement made there on a former day by Mr. Adolphus. "I myself," said he, "was greatly accountable for the extravagant length and the irrelevant abuse to which that individual had recourse, in fact, for no other purpose than that of repeating the vile libels which had appeared previously in the pages of the *Morning Chronicle*."

Mr. Halls: Will you allow me to say, that no part of what you say has anything to do with any case which has appeared before me. I know nothing about it.

Mr. Martin: I wish to say, that if it was any fault, I encouraged it. There is also another subject which I think will be consolatory to the Bench. I was, on the occasion to which I now allude, guilty of an act of great intemperance, I was greatly criminal; and not being able at that time to apologise, I come now humbly and penitentially to make my apology for what I said when that man was addressing the Bench. My opinion is, that we ought not to inflict intemperate

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punishment on the brute creation; and it was therefore particularly inexcusable in me to be so intemperate against that which was a brute—a brute, who was a brute without reason, and exiled almost from the society of human beings.

Mr. Halls: I must not hear this, as the parties about whom you are speaking, are not present. I must not, I cannot hear these observations. I have such an opinion of the Magistrate who heard the case, that I am sure he would not allow any imputation to be cast on your character, Mr. Martin, which you would not have an opportunity of refuting.

Mr. Martin: I bow. From Mr. Blackwood I have received the most penitential letter it is possible for a man to write. He acknowledges the atrocity of the libel, and allows the impropriety of disseminating it: that it got in without his knowledge; and, in the subsequent number, which will appear in a few days, there will appear an apology which will satisfy me. But I doubt if an apology will satisfy me; but this will, when he comes to be punished, serve to mitigate the sentence which will be passed on him, whether I proceed against him by an indictment at the Quarter Sessions, or obtain a criminal information in the King's Bench. Now, sir, your Worship, I shall take my leave, and, on a future day, make the application to which I have alluded."

Sir Richard, who, as we have seen, had a character

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for eccentricity, seemed to welcome these public performers, who were congenial to him, and enlivened the dull monotony of a police-court. A number of *soi-disant* "public men" were glad to advertise themselves and their "hobbies," and found Sir Richard always willing to give them the opportunity they desired. A field-day at Bow Street was thus often sought by Cobbett, Orator Hunt, and other demagogues who arrived with some grievance and were then truly welcome.

§ *Cobbett.*

Thus, the agitator Cobbett, having taken up the subject of turnpike overcharges, contested the matter so sturdily that he became a terror to the pike-keepers from his frequent summonses, and was actually allowed to go through the gates *free*. In 1823 he was very busy at this work, and on October 23 he appeared at the office, and laid informations against several turnpike toll-collectors for having taken too high a toll from poor men who kept one-horse carts, and who were very numerous on the roads leading out from Hyde Park Corner. Mr. Cobbett stated that, as nearly as he could calculate, the renters of the tolls in his neighbourhood had, for about eighty days last past, extorted to the amount of at least 5*l.* a day on the Kensington road alone; and that, too, from some of the most industrious and hard-working men in the whole kingdom.

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This was going on all round the metropolis, and even many miles out into the country in almost every direction. The tolls of all the roads from Hyde Park Corner westward are rented by rich Jews, against whose long purses poor men are wholly unable to contend. Mr. Cobbett, hearing of this system of oppression, about five weeks ago, went to the Kensington turnpike-gate, and told the toll-collectors that, if they did not desist from their extortion he would call them to account. Finding the extortion still going on, he resolved to make the complaint. He obtained summonses for several toll-collectors, and the like were obtained by seven one-horse cart men, who came to the office with him.

Mr. Levy, one of the lessees of the turnpike-roads, attended by a solicitor, appeared to answer to informations exhibited by Mr. William Cobbett against the collectors of tolls, for exacting from divers persons therein named, three halfpence more than by law allowed. Mr. Cobbett attended to conduct his case, and at the invitation of Sir R. Birnie took a place on the bench. Some amusing scenes followed, exhibiting the sturdy arrogance of the demagogue.

On the solicitor for the lessees requesting that it might stand over until they could have the assistance of counsel,

Mr. Cobbett: It is of vital importance to the public as well as the lessees, and more especially to the poor

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men, on whose behalf I appear—namely, the proprietors of one-horse carts, who have suffered shamefully by this system of extortion.

Mr. Levy: Why, you have never suffered, Mr Cobbett, and why need you be so warm in the cause?

Mr. Cobbett: No; because they know me; I have threatened to pull them up; and they are therefore glad to take threepence, instead of fourpence halfpenny.

Mr. Levy: Why they let you through for nothing sooner than be troubled with you; you know that you no sooner show your face, than they call out, "That's Cobbett; let him go."

Mr. Cobbett to Mr. Levy: You are a Jew, I suppose.

Mr. Levy: I am a Jew, it is true; but you are neither Jew, Christian, nor any other religion. *You are an Atheist, as everybody knows.*

Mr. Cobbett smiled, and observed, that what he had advanced in this office was strictly true. He had taken up the business only in consequence of an application from several poor men who were sufferers by the system. One poor man alone, a gardener, had paid more than 30*s.* in three-halfpences within the last few weeks.

Some other conversation followed, during which Mr. Levy said that he would undertake that between that day and the final decision of the case, the additional three-halfpence should not be taken. They only wanted time to meet the question properly.

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Mr. Cobbett: Time! you have had time enough. I told one of your men I meant to pull you all up.

Mr. Levy asked what man?

Mr. Cobbett: How can I remember the face of any one of your men, when you change them every two hours?

Mr. Levy: But you could have seen his name over the door.

Mr. Cobbett: I did not look for his name, for I did not think such a step necessary; but I give you my word I told him so.

Mr. Levy: Your word! what is your word? You have been talking *for these three years about your Gridiron, but you are not broiled yet.*

Mr. Cobbett: No, nor *crucified* either; nor do I wish to be.

Mr. Levy: Perhaps not; but you might be without injustice.

Sir R. Birnie said, he could not help thinking the proposition of Mr. Levy a fair one, and if Mr. Cobbett had no very powerful objection to offer, the case should be postponed.

Mr. Cobbett: Oh, in God's name, let them have the benefit of *counsel;* do not deprive the gentlemen of the benefit of *counsel.*

Ultimately, the hearing was postponed to Monday, October 13.

This is equally edifying whether we regard the

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toleration of the bench or the decency of the disputants.

§ *The Hunts.*

The well-known violent agitator, "Orator" Hunt, was in 1818 compelled to attend at Bow Street, owing to an unpleasant fracas. The "Orator," who was himself unstinted and unmeasured in his abuse of all who were opposed, was, as we might expect, particularly sensitive as to criticisms passed on his own proceedings. The absurd extravagancies into which popular agitation may lead its votaries was well illustrated by his proceedings. He was at the time busy contesting an election in London. On his way from Covent Garden, he halted with his party in front of three newspaper-offices in the Strand, where, after denunciations against the conduct of these journals, he burnt a copy of each. He attributed the change which had taken place in a paper called *The Observer*, to an individual being (as he termed it) at the head of its reporters, named Dowling. "This," he said, "was no other than the well-known Spectacle—Dowling the Spy." This was repeated more than once. This having been communicated to Mr. Dowling, he, on Friday, proceeded to the hustings with a horsewhip, and on Mr. Hunt arriving with his son, his dumb brother, and other friends, Mr. Dowling struck him several blows with his whip. In a moment the con-

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fusion became general, the crowd closed upon Mr. Dowling, and Mr. West and others seized him and prevented further violence. During the fracas the dumb brother and the younger Hunt contrived to strike him some blows upon the face across the shoulders of those who surrounded him. The civil power had by this time interfered. Mr. H. Hunt said that he had been informed before he came to the hustings that he was to be horsewhipped, and was advised to bring his stick. Mr. Dowling acknowledged he went to the hustings to horsewhip Mr. Hunt. Mr. Birnie said that he had but one course to pursue, and that was to bind both parties over to the sessions. Mr. H. Hunt then produced a letter, which he said he had received about five months since, in which he was informed that Mr. Dowling had declared that he would horsewhip him wherever he met him; and that he (Mr. Hunt) was prevented from appearing at the election of Lord Mayor, in consequence of that threat. Mr. Birnie now said that he felt himself bound to call upon Mr. Dowling to find sureties to keep the peace towards Mr. H. Hunt, and Mr. W. Hunt also to find similar sureties with regard to Mr. Dowling. Mr. Hunt said he did not wish that Mr. Dowling should be held in any sureties. Mr. Birnie: "What, not for horsewhipping you, Mr. Hunt?" Mr. Hunt: "No: it was a mere nothing; my brother received the blows ten times harder than I did; and

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I should not now even be afraid of Mr. Dowling and a hundred such Irish bullies!" Mr. Dowling said the latter remark was not one which could properly be replied to in the presence of a magistrate, but that since Mr. Hunt was so courteous, he was inclined to be equally so, and should not insist upon his (Hunt) being put to the trouble of entering into recognizances, as, if he considered it necessary, he could take other steps hereafter. Mr. Birnie thought both had acted with prudence, and complimented Mr. Hunt on his forbearance, after the manner in which he had been horsewhipped by Mr. Dowling. The parties then withdrew.

This singular toleration on the part of the magistrate, who did not perhaps appreciate the position, naturally led to further hostilities. The two gentlemen, not being bound to keep the peace, were panting to renew the fray, and Mr. Dowling was literally "spoiling for want of a bating." We are not surprised to find that within a few weeks Mr. Dowling appeared at Bow Street to complain of being assaulted by Mr. Hunt.

On Wednesday Mr. Hunt was brought to the office to answer a charge of assault on Mr. Dowling, who horsewhipped him on the hustings at the late Westminster election. Mr. Dowling said the simple accusation which he had to make against Mr. Hunt was that he had struck him on the preceding day in St.

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Clement's churchyard. He had been informed that it was Mr. Hunt's intention to give him what is called a good thrashing, and had resolved, if such an attempt were made, to make no resistance, but to treat him in the manner which persons who had forfeited the character of a gentleman deserved. On Tuesday morning, having borrowed a newspaper of Mr. Clement, he called into his shop about half-past eleven to return it. Mr. Hunt and his son were there. Mr. Dowling laid the paper on the counter and was retiring, when Mr. Hunt exclaimed, "Well, Mr. Spectacle Spy, are you disposed to finish my horsewhipping now?" Mr. Dowling replied, "Mr. Hunt, I wish to have no altercation with you," and was retiring, when Mr. Hunt applied to him the foulest epithets, and said he was a despicable government spy and informer. Mr. Dowling defied him or any man on earth to prove the assertion. Mr. Hunt then said, "You got it inserted in all the papers the account of your having horsewhipped me, and that I had not the spirit to resent it." Mr. Dowling in answer, rather for the ears of several persons who were in the shop than for Mr. Hunt's gratification, said, "Upon my honour, the charge is incorrect." Mr. Hunt then added, "If you did not, some of your myrmidon colleagues did, and I shall find an opportunity to give you a good thrashing," following up his threat with an invitation to go into the street then and fight it out. Mr. Dow-

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ling said that he might execute his threat then, but that he should feel himself degraded by resenting anything which so contemptible a fellow either said or did, at least in the way he seemed to wish, and was then quitting the shop, when Mr. Hunt followed him to the door, and repeated his invitation to a boxing-match in the street. Mr. Dowling again declined the proposed exhibition, and Mr. Hunt struck him a slight blow on the face, which knocked off his spectacles. "D—n you," continued Mr. Hunt, "will you resent that?" "Not in the way you would wish, Mr. Hunt," replied Mr. Dowling, "and even if I were disposed so far to degrade myself, the infirmity of being short-sighted would prevent me from engaging in so unequal a contest." Mr. Dowling then walked away, but returned, and asked for and obtained Mr. Hunt's address, with a view to the present proceedings.

This forbearance and restraint seems astonishing in one of Mr. Dowling's country, and rather suggests Bob Acres' "you're beneath my notice!" A Mr. Lydon, who was in Mr. Clement's shop when the affair took place, corroborated the statement of Mr. Dowling as to the abusive language of Mr. Hunt, and Mr. Dowling saying that he would not degrade himself by resenting anything which came from a person so well known. He said he saw Mr. Hunt strike Mr. Dowing one blow, and thought he attempted to strike

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him oftener, but he could not speak positively to this. This account Mr. Hunt pronounced grossly incorrect, inasmuch as he had never collared Mr. Dowling, nor did he strike him more than one blow, and that a slight one, rather with a view to make him resent it than otherwise; but Mr. Dowling had acted most cowardly, and had refused to fight. Mr. Dowling said he had much more reason to complain of the report than Mr. Hunt. Mr. Hunt: "This is a proof of the sort of fellows who act as reporters." Mr. Dowling said that he had heard Mr. Hunt had also turned reporter, and had written an account stating that he had knocked Mr. Dowling down, and performed other acts of heroism, with a view of having his account of the transaction inserted in the papers. Mr. Hunt did not deny this charge, and called upon for his defence, admitted that Mr. Dowling's statement was in a great measure correct, although exaggerated. Mr. Hunt added that the irritation of his mind, from what had happened at Covent Garden, had induced him to determine to give this bully an opportunity of finishing his horsewhipping if he thought fit; but he had, in a cowardly manner, refused to fight. Mr. Dowling: "You knew where I was to be found, and you also knew I was ready and anxious to meet you in the only way a gentleman ought to require." Mr. Hunt: "What! meet a Government spy who attempted to swear away the life of

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Dr. Watson!" Mr. Dowling repelled this attack, and Mr. Hunt left the office, after being bound over to the sessions, using the most abusive language towards Mr. Dowling. Such was this edifying scene.

The matter did not end here, and the turbulent Hunt family once more appeared at Bow Street.

"Mr. Thomas Hunt, a son of the celebrated orator, was, on Friday, brought to the office, charged with having attempted to *strangle a person* named Ferrar. The accused is about twenty-two years of age, and the accuser is well known at most of the gaming-houses. On Thursday night Ferrar and a companion of his named Quin, picked up a country squire, whom they introduced to the wine-house of Mr. Robottom, the 'Finish,' in James Street, Covent Garden, where they proposed to play at cards. Robottom refused to let them play in his house, and they drank wine till they fell asleep. Whilst Quin and Ferrar were sleeping some persons took off their hats, put a quantity of sawdust inside, and replaced them. When they awoke, on taking off their hats, the sawdust fell down their bosoms, and covered their clothes. They accused each other of playing the trick, and from high words proceeded to blows, when some one interfered, and said that Mr. Hunt had done it. Ferrar called Mr. Hunt by many opprobrious names, and Mr. Hunt, who denied having done it, said he was a blackleg, and cautioned the country 'squire' against forming

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an acquaintance with him. This observation provoked Ferrar, and he uttered a most filthy and unmanly insinuation against Mr. Hunt, whose indignation being raised, he seized Ferrar by the throat, and gave him such a tremendous squeeze that he was, in less than half a minute, nearly strangled.

"Robottom was examined, and he said that he had prevented Ferrar and Quin from 'pigeoning' the 'squire,' and that Mr. Hunt was not the person who put the sawdust in the hats of Ferrar and Quin.

"Mr. Hunt said that he certainly could not deny having committed the assault, but he contended that any one possessing a spark of manly feeling on hearing a wretch apply such odious language to him, though he might be a dwarf in stature, would rush upon the slanderer and annihilate him if he could, so he (Mr. Hunt) would have destroyed the villain Ferrar if he could.

"Sir R. Birnie said that if any one had used such language in reference to him, as Ferrar had applied to Mr. Hunt, *he would have beaten his head off his shoulders*, and he would not, therefore, call upon Mr. Hunt to find bail. The sessions were sitting, and Mr. Ferrar might go and indict Mr. Hunt. The case was then dismissed."

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CHAPTER VII.

MORNINGS AT BOW STREET.

THE attraction of a police court, particularly for the lower classes, has always been extraordinary, and amounts to a positive fascination. A well-known humourist, and a very acute observer of the odd whims and turns of human character, and who has made a particular study of Bow Street office, Mr. George Grossmith, has described to me how much he has been struck with this odd passion. He had often seen in the unwashed crowd, herded at the bottom of the court, a particular face peering over the barrier, day after day, all absorbed in the humours of the scene. By and by, the attraction would operate on his movements, and actually draw him nearer: he would be recognized in a more convenient place for observation. In time he would be found under the witness-box, and finally, after an interval, would be recognized at the bar itself! Then would come a blank, during which he might be presumed to be working out his sentence, when one day the face would be recognized in its old place beyond the barrier, to pass once more through the various stages, till it again faced the magistrate at

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the bar. This enjoyment is no doubt founded on the taste for anything dramatic, which is here provided *gratis*.

The same eagerness is also shown by the superior classes when any case affecting persons of the same degree is in progress. Then the narrow precincts are blocked by fine ladies and gentlemen; the magistrate's bench is invaded, inconvenience of all kinds, a stifling, almost fetid atmosphere, endured and breathed cheerfully, and every stage of which is a tedious formal procedure is relished, in the hope of dramatic "bits" occasionally turning up. Sometimes thirty or forty reporters from all parts of the kingdom crowd in, and pay their acknowledgments at the close to "the courteous clerk, Mr. ——," who has been at his wit's end to find them accommodation. The Press has indeed helped to develop this taste; for, five-and-twenty years ago, only a couple of these auxiliaries attended, who gave a compressed historical epitome of the proceedings. Now, when there is anything sensational, the whole dialogue is furnished, and every question and answer set out, together with the demeanour of the audience, marked by what the French call "hilarity," or "*rires*," "loud laughter," or "roars of laughter, in which the magistrate heartily joined." It must be a curious, original feeling, for a prisoner, whose liberty or life may be involved, to hear this merriment. We can fancy his aching wonder of heart,

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"Sport to you, death to me." When such absorbing cases are protracted for many days, the audience gathered in old Bow Street is something amazing; all the courts and alleys give up their unclean miscellany; and, in the notorious Bolton and Park case, the very housetops were lined to see the accused depart in the black van.

On old bookstalls we sometimes light on an odd volume of "Life in London," or the "Finish," with the brilliantly coloured and spirited plates of the doings of "Tom and Jerry." This work furnishes a complete panorama of the gay gentleman's progress, which appeared to consist in defying all authority in the pursuit of pleasure. Scuffles with watchmen, seizure of hackney-coaches, "rows" at Drury Lane Theatre, general conflict,—this was carried out with a certain ruthless gallantry and profuse expenditure of cash, all which, strange to say, secured immunity, and even indulgent treatment, at Bow Street. The account of the doings of Tom and Jerry, as recorded, seemed gross exaggeration, but it was really an exact account of a curious time. The writer, Pierce Egan, seems to have been known to Richardson, who has left a curious account of these disorderly days. Mr. Egan, he says, was of respectable family. He had been a compositor, a bookseller, a sporting writer, and contributor of sporting news to the newspapers, &c. In the last-mentioned capacity he was employed by the proprietor

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of the *Weekly Dispatch* to record the "doings of the ring," in which employment his peculiar phraseology, and his superior knowledge of his business, soon rendered him eminent beyond all rivalry and competition. He was flattered and petted by pugilists and peers; his patronage and countenance were sought for by all who considered the road to a prize-fight the road to reputation and honour. Forty years before, his presence was understood to confer respectability on any meeting convened for the furtherance of bull-baiting, cock-fighting, cudgelling, wrestling, boxing, and all that comes within the category of "manly sports." If he "took the chair," success was hailed as certain in the object in question. On the occasions of his presence, he was accompanied by a "tail." In the event of opposition to his views and opinions, his satellites had a mode of enforcing his authority, which had the efficacy without the tediousness of discussion; and though, in personal strength, far from a match for any sturdy opponent, he had a courage and a vivacity in action which were very highly estimated both by his friends and foes.

As the literature of Combe Wood and Moulsey Hurst began to decline, he had the sense to cultivate the literature of the theatre, and his tact in the delineation of a certain side of life was exemplified in the farces of which he was the writer. He had on several occasions visited Oxford and Cambridge, and had

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obtained the "honours of the sitting" prolonged throughout the night in many of the colleges of those venerable institutions.

But though reporting was in its infancy fifty years ago, the eccentricities of Bow Street permitted an odd and original form of recording all that occurred. The general tone of hilarity and facetiousness thus tolerated or encouraged by the magistrates, operated in rather a novel way. The public became interested and curious to know what was going on, and it felt that they often thus lost what was "as good as a play." The exhibitions of "fast life," the profuse use of slang, &c., were too good to be lost; and prompted some ingenious reporters to try their hands at giving a lively and dramatic air to what went on before them. One, Mr. Wight, who acted for the *Morning Herald*, gradually obtained a sort of celebrity for his powers in this direction. He had the knack of adopting a rollicking, "chaffing" tone in all that he described. He modelled his style after that of Mr. Pierce Egan, and added many strokes of what was then considered humour. The general tone was, however, ridicule of the unlucky beings who were treated, and who, in addition to their legitimate sufferings and inconvenience, found themselves laughed at by the town.

It is difficult to say how far the happy imagination of the reporter is accountable for the incidents and dialogue of these scenes. But, setting this question

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aside, the following sketches, besides being entertaining, from their dramatic spirit, have a curious interest as pictures of social life. One is struck by the general violence that was then abroad, and we wonder how the spirit of disorder could have been kept in check at all. The inspiration of "Tom and Jerry," it will be seen, was at work, and every one of the "right sort" was eager to show his "sort" by either "boxing" a watchman, driving off with a hackney-coach, or "bilking" a tavern-keeper. The following illustrates these noble aims :—

§ *Gentlemen Jehus making the most of a Jarvey.*

John Wigley Williams, Esquire, was put forward from amongst a group of nocturnals from St. Martin's watch-house. He had been given in charge by a hackney-coachman for non-payment of his fare. He was a young and altogether exquisite personage; but his Parisian-cut toggery was sadly deteriorated by the dust and dirt of his subterraneous dormitory.

Coachee stated that "this gentleman and another gentleman," at eleven o'clock the night before called him off the stand in the Old Bailey, and before he could get down to let them into his coach they both jumped upon his box, snatched the reins and whip out of his hand, and began flogging and driving away "like mad," down Ludgate Hill and up Fleet Street.

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He endeavoured to stop them repeatedly, but it was of no use; every time he opened his mouth the other gentleman said to this gentleman, "Shall I shove him off the box, Wigley?" and every time this gentleman replied, "Go it!" In this manner they galloped on through Temple Bar and along the Strand, cruelly flogging the horses at every step. "Don't flog my horses, gentlemen, they arn't used to it," cried coachee. "Shall I shove him off the box, Wigley?" said one gentleman—"Go it!" replied the other. At last they reached Charing Cross; and there coachee made such a determined resistance that all three were in danger of tumbling off the box in a bunch, and the horses were stopped by some persons passing, when one of the "gentlemen" ran away like a "pickpocket," as coachee said, and the other refusing to pay anything for his ride, was handed over to the watchman, who carried him forthwith to the watch-house.

When the coachman had told his story, the magistrate, addressing himself to the captured Jehu, asked, "Pray what are you, sir?"

"Me, your worship? I am Mithter John Wigley Williamths."

"That is your name only. How do you describe yourself?"

"I thuppose, your worthip, sthpeaking of mythelf, I thoud thay I am a gentleman."

"A gentleman, sir, is a very equivocal title now-a-

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days, and if the coachman thinks proper to prosecute you for the assault upon him I would then know something more of you."

The coachman said he would rather decline prosecuting for the assault, because it would be such a loss of time to him.

Mister John Wigley Williams said there was an agreement that they should drive themselves; and he would have paid the fare if the coachman would have let him gone on as far as he wished to go. He complained bitterly of the treatment he had met with in the watch-house, having been thrust down into a filthy dungeon——

"Where all other disorderly people are put," said his worship, to save him the trouble of finishing the sentence.

The watch-house keeper said a bed was offered to the gentleman, but he would not have it, and was so very impudent and noisy that it was found necessary to put him below.

The magistrate ordered him to pay the coachman his fare from the Old Bailey to Charing Cross, together with two shillings for his time in attending to make his complaint.

Mister Gentleman John Wigley Williams obeyed this order without demur; and having paid another shilling for his discharge-fee, he was suffered to go home to his parents.

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§ *Gabriel Spriggins.*

Amongst a number of "disorderlies" who were brought up before the sitting magistrate (Alderman Garratt), for breaches of the peace or disorderly conduct, a person of gentlemanly appearance and manners, who called himself Gabriel Spriggins, particularly attracted the attention of the magistrate.

"A wretched old charwoman, who lives in a dirty, and at night dismal place, called Star Court, Chancery Lane, came forward and charged Gabriel with having broken open her bedroom door in the dead of the preceding night. She said she was a lone woman, who had but one son, a sailor, who lived in her room—a garret at No. 3—when he was in town; and it so happened that he was sleeping at her feet. The old woman, who it was evident had not yet recovered from the fright in which she had been put, ran on with a detail of circumstances, which the magistrate could only clearly collect from her son, a gloomy-looking sailor. From his account it appeared that, at four o'clock on the morning before, they were awakened by the barking of the old woman's dog, and heard a sort of scratching at the room door. The sailor thought it was a cat scratching to get in, and beat the dog for awakening him on so slight an occasion. The noise then ceased, and all was quiet for a time. Some time after she was awakened by a noise as if the door of the room had been burst open, and after an interval

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of silence she felt a cold hand wandering over her bed, when she exclaimed, thinking her son had got up, "Jack, is that your hand?" "No, mother, I wasn't stirring," said the sailor. "Then there's some fellow in the room," replied the old woman. The sailor, at the word, sprung out of his bed, and felt about in the dark for the intruder; designing to send him, whoever he might be, by one step, from the top to the bottom of the stairs. He caught hold of him at last, and gave him a twist towards the door with the design mentioned, which threw him across the old woman as she lay in bed. The sailor flung himself upon the intruder, whom he found was rather a heavier opponent than he calculated upon, and threatened to blow his brains out if he stirred. Gabriel, who was under the sailor, threatened to murder both of them if they resisted him, and accompanied his threat by many "strange and desperate oaths." The old woman, as soon as she could disencumber herself from the load, went to the window and screamed out "murder!" lustily, whilst the intruder and her son were grappling on the floor for ascendency, with various success. The watchman and a crowd of the miserable lodgers in the house soon rushed into the room and seized the prisoner. They were not a little amazed to find a person of gentlemanly appearance in the house, and in such a situation, and the whole had a most curious appearance, particularly from the figure of the old

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woman, with her hair hanging about her neck, and of her son, who was, of course, undressed. The prisoner threatened furiously, and resisted being carried to the watch-house, whither however he was taken, but could not be prevailed upon to give any account of himself, how he got to that height, or for what purpose. The house, it appeared, is let out in lodgings to numerous miserable lodgers, for whose convenience the door is left open, and they sleep in all that enviable security which is produced by having nothing worth taking to lose.

The prisoner, who had, during the recital of the story expressed the highest surprise and amusement, as if the witnesses had been relating a fiction, when called upon gravely by the magistrate to tell who and what he was, and to account for his extraordinary proceedings, replied, "My name is Ireland: I am *flauto primo*, which means, your worship, principal flute, at the King's Theatre, where I was last night. The whole of the strange story that these people have been telling you I know nothing of, and certain I am that I was in my own bed, long before and after four in the morning, therefore I conclude that these good people have been dreaming."

He was immediately recognized by a gentleman present, as the eminent flute player of the Italian Opera house, where most lovers of music must have heard, and been delighted with, his fine tones and brilliant execution. The magistrate saw at once that

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the son of Apollo had been sacrificing rather freely to Bacchus, and that he was still under the influence of his libations, although it was not apparent at first sight. He appeared impressed with the idea, as he had slept in the Compter, that he had been in his bed all night. The worthy alderman gave particular instructions to the officers to take care of him, and convey him to his friends. Poor Ireland is since dead: 'he was a fellow of infinite jest;' universally esteemed, and in his profession admirable."

§ *A Bold Stroke for a Dinner.*

Officers in the services did not disdain to try and "bilk" a tavern-keeper of a dinner. But this again was only part of the morals of "fast life."

"There was a little personage in striped cotton trousers and blue surtout, calling himself "Lieutenant Seaman, of the Honourable East India Company's Foreign Naval Service," brought before G. R. Minshull, Esq., the other night, at the suit of Mr. Jaggers, landlord of the Army and Navy Coffee House, St. Martin's Lane; on a charge of having conspired, with two other persons unknown, to defraud the said Mr. John Jaggers of three pounds of rump steak, one pot of porter, two bottles of sherry, &c., &c., &c.

Lieutenant Seaman, when brought before his worship, could not keep his perpendicular; and every now

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and then he came down with a hiccupping lee-lurch upon the magisterial table.

"Stand up, sir," said the attending gaoler. "Is that the way to conduct yourself before a magistrate?"

"*Hiccup!*" replied Lieutenant Seaman, opening his eyes as wide as he could; "and is that the way you address a British officer, I should like to know? Have I the—*hiccup*—honour of addressing Sir Richard Birnie?"

"No—my name is Minshull," replied the magistrate.

"Aye—I'm sorry for that, Mr. Minshull—I wish you had been Sir Richard Birnie, because I should have the honour of knowing you—and you would have known my family to be vastly respectable—and—*hiccup!*"

Here the lieutenant stuck fast; but if anybody else attempted to speak he interrupted them by desiring they would recollect the respect due to a British officer; and it was not till his worship had threatened to have him locked up, that he could be prevailed upon to be quiet.

It appeared, by the tavern-keeper's statement, that the gallant lieutenant and two other superb-looking gentlemen, came into his house that afternoon, and ordered "rump-steaks, and *etceteras* for *three;*" "And, d'ye hear," added the lieutenant—who seemed to be the

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leading man of the party—"D'ye hear—let them be done to a turn, and served up *instanter*."

A dish of rump-steaks—full of gravy, tender as a chicken, and delicately garnished with fresh scraped horse-radish, was served up "*instanter*" accordingly, with India pickle, a foaming pot of porter, and all things usually appertaining to a dish of rump-steaks. These things demolished, capital Stilton, prime old Cheshire, and double Gloucester, with two bottles of excellent sherry, followed; and then—as soon as the sherry was out—two of the gentlemen *bolted* without saying a word about the bill. Still, the landlord thought the lieutenant would pay, but he was deceived; for in the next minute the lieutenant attempted to *bolt* also; and so he would have done, had not the landlord whipped out of his bar as quick as lightning, and caught him by the skirt of his blue surtout just as he was crossing the threshold. Thus awkwardly taken to, the lieutenant confessed he had no money; and thereupon the landlord consigned him to the care of a constable.

His worship now called upon the lieutenant for his defence; and the lieutenant replied, "It's all very true—and I'll pay on Friday." He was told that Friday would not do, that he must pay instantly, or be committed to prison. He declared he could not pay—"Come what, come may"—and he was committed accordingly. We understand his family is

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highly respectable, and very much annoyed by his eccentricities."

The adventures thus described and embellished were generally concerned with the so-called "Life" at the theatres, saloons, and flash houses. The impression left, it must be said, is something inexpressibly vulgar. The exhibition of "manners," at the theatre particularly, is extraordinary from its coarse brutality. Here are some further specimens.

§ *A Battle in the Boxes.*

"Young Mr. Dakins occupied a front seat in one of the boxes till the conclusion of the first piece. Then, having nothing else to do, he looked round the house. Suddenly he espied a party of friends, male and female, in the very next box. They occupied the front seat and part of the second; and he, perceiving that there was a vacant space on the second seat, went and took possession of it forthwith, and was highly delighted at the luckiness of the circumstance. In a few minutes in comes the little round man—"Hallo!" says he, "you've got my seat, young man." "*Your* seat, sir?" said the young man, with some surprise. "Yes, *my* seat, sir," replied the round one. "Well, sir," rejoined the young one, "you need not be so hot upon 't—there is a very nice seat, which I have just left, in the front row of the adjoining box—will you have the goodness to take that, as I wish to remain here

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with my friends?" "No, sir," replied the round one, very waspishly—"no, sir, I shall not! This is my seat—I have *satten* upon it all the evening, and I'll have no other; and let me tell you, sir, that I think your conduct in taking it, sir, very ungentlemanly, sir!" The young man's friends now interfered, but in vain; and at length they told him to let the little fat man have his seat, and they would make room for him in the front row. So there they sat, enduring all the moist miseries of four in a row, till the end of the second piece; when the young man, turning round his head, perceived the little round man's seat empty again; and, after waiting a few minutes, and finding he did not return, he again took possession of it, to the great relief of the poor ladies in the front row. But he had scarcely seated himself when in pops the little round man again, and without saying more than "I see this is done on purpose to insult me!" he seized the young man by the collar of the coat behind, lifted him from the seat, and very dexterously slid himself into it. In an instant all was uproar.—"Turn him out!"—"Throw him over!"—The little fat man lost his balance, fell backwards, and in that position he let fly "*an immense volley of kicks*," which the young man received on his stomach. The ladies shrieked, the gentlemen tried to hold his legs down, the house cried "Shame!"—and at length, after kickings and cuffings, and pullings and haulings, quite distressing to detail,

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the little round man was delivered over to the peace-officers, and conveyed to the watch-house, panting like a porpoise, and perspiring at every pore.

The magistrate said there were faults on both sides. In the first place, the defendant should not have quitted his seat without saying to his neighbour that he intended to return; secondly, common courtesy ought to have induced the complainant to have relinquished it when demanded; and, thirdly, that the defendant should have demanded it civilly. Upon the whole, it was a very silly piece of business, and he would recommend them to retire, and make an end of it by mutual explanation, or apology.

This pacific advice, however, was rejected by both parties, and so the little round man was held to bail."

It is indeed extraordinary to compare the condition of the theatres of those days with their state at present, and it would seem that the people frequented them for every other purpose than that of seeing the play. This, it has not been noticed, was a consequence of the theatrical monopoly then enjoyed by the two patent theatres, which, from the great size and spaciousness of accommodation, offered attractions to the disorderly followers of what was called "Fast life." The proprietor, certain of his vast attendance, was not above offering inducements to this miscellany, and with this view prepared vast lobbies and a still more peculiar institution of the day, "*The saloon*"—

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a magnificent and palatial chamber, still to be seen at Drury Lane Theatre, which was crowded every night with fair Cyprians and their followers, always encouraged to attend by even respectable managers. The saloon was as important a part of the entertainment as was the auditorium, and had its own "audiences."

It may be well conceived that it became a difficult duty to preserve order and decorum in such assemblies, and a regular force of officers from Bow Street were engaged at the theatre, of whom the two Bonds, father and son, were the best known.

"Tom and Jerry," and "Bob Logic," their mentor and friend, used to repair to the theatre, not to see the play, but to "make a night of it." The boxes were constantly the scene of shameful "rows," drunken "gentlemen" forcing their way and attempting to thrust others from their seats, putting their legs on the seats, &c. Thus Thomas Baker Cox, Esq., of No. 1, Soho Square, accompanied by a friend, appeared before Sir R. Birnie, to prefer a complaint against Bond, the principal constable of Drury Lane Theatre, for assaulting him in the pit of that theatre. The magistrate immediately directed that Bond should be sent for.

"Mr. Cox stated that he went to Drury Lane Theatre on Wednesday night, for the purpose of seeing "An Operatic Extravaganza, called Giovanni in Ireland." He seated himself in the pit, and some of the scenes he applauded, and some of them he

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condemned, just as he thought they deserved, when he was suddenly seized by the collar, and dragged from the seat by Bond, who, in so doing, tore his shirt, and seemed strongly inclined to proceed to further violence, and drag him out of the house altogether; indeed, he verily believed he would have done so, had it not been for the repeated cries of "Shame! shame!" which resounded on all sides. These cries, however, induced him to relinquish his grasp, and he (Mr. Cox) demanded to know his name, but he answered only by producing a constable's staff; and it was not till after long hesitation and urgent reiteration of the demand, that he gave his name, and stated himself to belong to the Police Establishment at Bow Street. He added that he repeatedly observed Bond himself *applauding* the performances in the most vociferous manner.

"Well, sir," asked the magistrate, "do you not think one man has as much right to applaud, as another has to censure."

Mr. Cox: "Certainly, sir; but I think that it should have taught him the impropriety of interfering with others who were doing no more than himself."

Bond was now called upon for his account of the affray. He said the gentleman (Mr. C.) came into the pit in the middle of the performance, hurried to his seat, and without waiting a moment to see whether what was going on was good, bad, or indifferent, he began shouting, "Off! off! off!" with all his might;

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until the audience became so much annoyed, that there was a general call throughout the house of "Turn him out!" and then, and not till then, did he lay hold of him. He stated further, that the complainant was the only person in the house who expressed the slightest disapprobation! In conclusion, he denied all that had been said about tearing the shirt, or the *extra* "dragging," and he affirmed that he should be able to bring "hundreds of witnesses" to disprove it.

Mr. Cox persisted in the correctness of his statement. He denied that he commenced his disapprobation at his first entering the house; on the contrary, he had been there a long time, and it was not until he saw a representation of a Court of Justice, in which singing was introduced, that he expressed any decided censure; and he contended that he had an undoubted right to express his opinion of any theatrical performance in the customary manner. He then asked his worship whether he could imagine anything more preposterously ridiculous than singing in a Court of Justice; and he was proceeding to descant on some other incongruities in the "*Extravaganza*," when—

Sir R. Birnie interrupted him by observing that he did not sit there to give opinions upon theatrical performances; all he had to do was to ascertain whether an unjustifiable assault had been committed. The proprietors of the theatre employed several constables merely for the preservation of the peace, and it re-

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mained for Bond to show that the complainant was committing a breach of the peace, or doing anything to excite a breach of it; and, if he could not do this, his interference was certainly unjustifiable. Bond, however, had talked of having witnesses to produce; and in order that both parties might be more fully prepared, he should postpone the further examination of the matter.

On Friday, Bond, the officer, attended before Sir R. Birnie, with two persons, who, he said, would prove all that he had stated with respect to the conduct of Mr. Cox, to be true. These persons were, a publican in Newgate Market, and a tradesman of the same place. Mr. Cox was called, but did not answer, nor did he appear in the course of the day, and the matter therefore rests for the present undetermined."

Here is a sketch of a scene at Drury Lane Theatre, which shows what "Yahoos" were the professors of "fast life," as it was called.

§ *A Spree at the Theatre.*

"Christopher Dobson and Harding Montague, Esquires *of course*, but very coarse esquires, were charged with creating a disturbance, and assaulting the peace-officers, at Drury Lane Theatre, during the performances there.

They were brought from Covent Garden watch-house, together with a gang of young thieves, dis-

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orderly cobblers, drunken prostitutes, houseless vagabonds, and other off-scourings of society; and a very respectable appearance they made.

Eleven o'clock at length arrived, and the magistrates having taken their seats, the demolished Corinthians were ushered into their presence, and a charge, of which the following is the substance, was exhibited against them.

Between the third and fourth acts of *Wild Oats*, they were swaggering about the lobbies, insulting everybody that came in their way; the "big one"—that is to say, Mr. Kit Dobson—offering to *mill* "anybody in the world," and repeatedly exclaiming, "Oh, that a man of my own powers would come athwart me!" —and the "thin one" (that's Mr. Harding Montague), lisping responsively, "That's your sort! Go it, Kitty my *covy*." Nobody taking the challenge, *Kitty my covy*, in the overflowing of his Corinthianism, seized the *thin one*, dashed him against the wall of the lobby, and shattered one of the lamps with his empty *knowledge-box*. The *thin one* took it in good part, but Mr. Spring, the box book-keeper, who happened to witness the feat, was not so well pleased, and sent for Bond, the officer, to remove them. Bond prevailed upon them to be a little more quiet; but in a quarter of an hour after, he found them in the saloon, sparring, bellowing, and capering, like a pair of inebriated *ourang outangs*, as he said, to the great danger of the

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mirrors, and the scandal even of *that* temple of depravity. He again attempted to remonstrate with them: but all he could get from them, was a challenge to fight from *Kitty my covy;* and therefore he called for the assistance of his brother officers, determined to remove them entirely from the theatre. Jones, Lewis, and Drummond, of the patrole, and Sayers, a parish constable, came to his assistance; and now began what the Eganites call "*a prime spree*" *Kitty my covy* laying about him with all his might, and the *thin one* doing his little utmost to help him. The officers, however, got them out of the house; but they obstreperously insisted upon re-entering; and at last, after a long altercation, they conveyed them to the watch-house. In their way thither, *Kitty my covy* contrived to get hold of the hand of one of the officers (Jones), and gave it such a twist, that three of his fingers were dislocated, and the tendons of the wrist so much injured, that the surgeon of the establishment gave it as his opinion, that he would not be able to use his hand for several weeks to come. When they got into the watch-house, this same *Kitty* behaved more like a mad bull than anything else—refusing to *go below*, and threatening them with the displeasure of the Marquis of W——r. At length, however, they were put down; but in the conflict, Lewis (an old and rather infirm officer) received such a savagely marked kick in the groin from Mr. Kit Dobson, that he was laid

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senseless on the floor for several minutes. Drummond, another officer of diminutive make, he also kicked violently on the stomach; indeed all the five officers engaged were injured in some way or other.

The magistrates now called upon these amateurs of "*Life*" for their defence; whereupon Mr. Christopher Dobson delivered himself *verbatim* as follows :—

"Why, your worships, all I have to say about it is, that I *do* belong to His Majesty's service, but haven't been in the habit of being much in town, and the fact is, I don't know what it is; but this gentleman (the thin one) is my friend—I suppose we were not in our regular senses; certainly we were not so sober as we might have been—but the fact is, that we must make good any damage that we have done."

Mr. Harding Montague said nothing, but he *gasped* pitifully, and looked altogether so droopingly *lackadaisical*, that the very officers seemed sorry for him.

Their worships ordered that they should put in bail, to answer the *five* distinct charges of assault at Quarter Sessions—Christopher Dobson, *Esquire*, in 100*l.*, and two sureties of 50*l.* each, and Harding Montague, *Esquire*, in 80*l.*, and two sureties of 40*l.* each.

The unfortunate gentlemen remained locked up the whole day among the *other* unfortunates, in the strong room, and in the evening they gave the bail required; but it was at the same time intimated, that the Grand Jury had returned *five* true bills against them, and

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that they would in all probability be taken upon Bench warrants on the morrow. Oh this "*Life!*" "

Even ladies were not secure against violence from the ungentlemanly blackguards who frequented the theatres. In our time persons in the pit suffer uncomplainingly or with good-humoured grumbling when some lofty bonnet completely obscures what is doing on the stage. Not so the "Tom and Jerry" blackguards in the boxes. Thus with a Mr. Sadd, who had attended Mrs. and Miss Higginbottom to Covent Garden, the former lady, as it was admitted, being arrayed in an enormous hat or bonnet which shut off all view of the stage. This grievance, however, is much complained of in our own time, and the bonnet "pittite" who has come out for an evening's entertainment finds himself deprived of even the sight of the stage by some growth of hat directly in front of him. He, however, submits with a grumbling protest.

"When the opera commenced, the defendant Hutchinson, in a very rude and peremptory manner, ordered Mrs. Higginbottom to take off the "monstrous" bonnet which she had on her head. She was offended at the manner in which she had been addressed and treated his commands with contempt. The defendant used most offensive language, thrust his knees against Mrs. Higginbottom's back, and repeated his order. Gross remarks were made about the size of the lady's person, and also of her bonnet, and a young man

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about seventeen years of age thrust himself between the lady and witness, and he pushed him from him. The defendant and another man, who was short, stout, bald, and passionate, seized witness by the collar, tore his coat [here the garment, tattered and torn, was exhibited], and struck him repeatedly. Witness called in an officer, and asked Mr. Hutchinson to give his address. He refused to do so, and witness believed that he was ashamed of his outrageous and ungentlemanly behaviour. The language of the defendant and his friends was most gross, and *one of them said that his mother's bonnet was the size of a hayrick.* Mr. Hutchinson said, "Now, sir, the real fact is, that I and a gentleman present, and a youth about sixteen years of age, took our seats in the pit of the theatre, on a form behind a very large female who wore a most tremendous bonnet. Its size was monstrous, and prevented me from having a view of the performances or of the stage even." A gentleman who wore spectacles, who sat near him, said that the bonnet ought to be pulled off if she would not take it off. On observing that there was room for one person to sit by the side of Mr. Sadd, he placed his young friend there, and Mr. Sadd violently forced himself against the youth. Being indignant at such conduct, he seized Mr. Sadd by the collar, and dragged him from the youth to his proper seat.

Mr. Minshull: This *fracas* appears to have arisen

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entirely out of the circumstance of a lady wearing a monstrous-sized bonnet. I own that the fashion of wearing such large coverings for the heads of ladies in theatres is a great nuisance to play-goers; but it was not right to talk about pulling the bonnet from a lady's head, and it might not be convenient for a lady at all times to take off her bonnet.

Mr. Lomas said, It was not true that Mr. Hutchinson addressed her in ungentlemanly language. The assault was first committed by Mr. Sadd thrusting himself violently against a youth sixteen years of age, his (Mr. Lomas's) nephew.

Mr. Minshull: It is a pity that such monstrous-sized bonnets should be worn at a theatre. The case has a different appearance since the explanation of Mr. Lomas.

Mr. Sadd: Mr. Lomas assaulted me, and I charge him with the outrage.

Mr. Minshull: Both gentlemen must find bail to answer the charge at the sessions. Bail was put in and the party discharged."

§ *How to catch a Customer.*

An extraordinary case in 1824 shows that the buffoonery of the day had extended even to tradesmen in their relations with their customers.

"A gentleman well known in the *rouge et noir* circles, presented himself before the magistrate to claim redress against a bootmaker in New Street, Covent Garden.

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The unfortunate gentleman had walked, or rather *twaddled* to the office in a pair of loose slippers; and there was such a manifestation of suffering in his voice, countenance, and gesture, that everybody pitied him.

He said he had been miserable enough to have some dispute with his bootmaker, in which he might perhaps have expressed himself rather more warmly than the occasion warranted. On Saturday the bootmaker sent him home a pair of boots which had been some time under repair, and on Sunday morning he put them on and walked out, intending to call upon several of his friends. But he had not walked more than two or three hundred yards when his feet began to feel "cursedly uncomfortable," and the more he walked the more uncomfortable they became. He returned home. "Bring the *bootjack*, Molly!" he exclaimed. Molly brought the bootjack, and with eager anticipation of ease he stuck his heel into the friendly fork, but, alas! he no sooner began to pull than his agonies were increased tenfold! and the bootjack was kicked away in despair. At last—for it is miserable to dwell upon such horrors—at last the gentleman, sweating at every pore, and wound up almost to madness with his pain, thrust his heel once more into the yawning jack, and pulled with such a desperate might, that his foot came forth with its poor toes completely scarified! Not only the stocking, but the skin was left behind, and even his very corns were torn up by the roots!

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Suffice it to say, that the other foot was torn away in the same manner, and it came forth from the confounded boot almost as skinless as an anatomical preparation.

And now, what do our readers suppose wrought all this miserable mischief? The bootmaker had, with "*malice prepense,*" as it would appear, lined the whole interior of the toe part of each boot with *cobbler's wax!* The gentleman himself was firmly of opinion that it was done maliciously, and he urged the magistrate to grant him redress.

The magistrate observed that it was a new case; and though it was certainly a most unpleasant one, he feared it could not be brought within his jurisdiction.

The gentleman suggested that it would probably come under the act for preventing the wanton destruction of property. His stockings had been destroyed, his boots had been spoiled, and his feet had been cruelly scarified. All this had been done wantonly and wilfully, he said; and in corroboration of the premises, he produced the pair of silk stockings which he wore on the agonizing occasion.

These stockings certainly were spoiled; and after much urging on the part of the gentleman, his worship consented that a summons should issue for the bootmaker's appearance.

However, it came to nothing; for in half an hour after the gentleman crept back to the office, and said

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he and the bootmaker had come to an *éclaircissement* that would render his worship's interference unnecessary. What was the nature of that *éclaircissement* did not appear."

§ *The Champion and Coppersmith.*

"The Champion of England—not he who, gallantly armed, rode proudly through ranks of assembled chivalry, and challenged the world in defence of his Sovereign—but the champion of England's prouder *pugilism*—the belted hero of the prize-ring—the man whose fist is fate—the—in a word, honest *Tom Cribb*, entered the office covered with mud, and holding in his giant grasp, a little, well-bemudded, wriggling coppersmith, named *William Bull*. "And please your worships," said the champion, "this here little rascal (*shaking him*), comes into my tap-room, with two or three dirty chaps of the same sort, and got so sweet upon themselves with drinking *beer*, that they must needs go into the *parlour* to drink *grog*, amongst the *gentlemen*, your worships! and because I wouldn't stand that, this here little rascal (*shaking him again*) smashes two panes of glass to shivers, and then tried to *bolt*, but it wouldn't do."

The champion was desired to loose his hold upon the coppersmith, and he did so instantly; but he still regarded him with a look of angry indignation, whilst the saucy little coppersmith, adjusting his disordered

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jacket, exclaimed, "My eyes, Mister Tommy! let us ever catch you at *Bristol* again, and we'll *zarve* you out for this!"

Mr. Bull—*Bill Bull* he called himself—was ordered to be quiet, on pain of being instantly locked up; and other witnesses of the affair were examined, by whose evidence the champion's account of it was fully substantiated, with an additional circumstance or two, which he, with his usual modesty, had omitted to mention, viz., that he, with his own right arm, cleared his house of the three coxcombical coppersmiths in a minute; and that when the fourth, Mr. Bill Bull, milled the glaze and bolted, the champion himself pursued with the fleetness of a wild elephant, caught the scampering coppersmith by the "scuff of the neck," and falling with him to the earth, they rolled over and over in the mud till the *impetus* of their fall was spent! and this was the way in which they came to be so muddily encased.

The coppersmith had nothing to say for himself, except that he thought himself, "as good a man as Mr. Tommy, any day," and that he had as much right to drink grog in a parlour as any *other* gentleman.

The magistrate commended the champion's conduct; told him he should be protected from insult and outrage in his business; and ordered the potvaliant coppersmith to be locked up until he should pay for the windows he had demolished.

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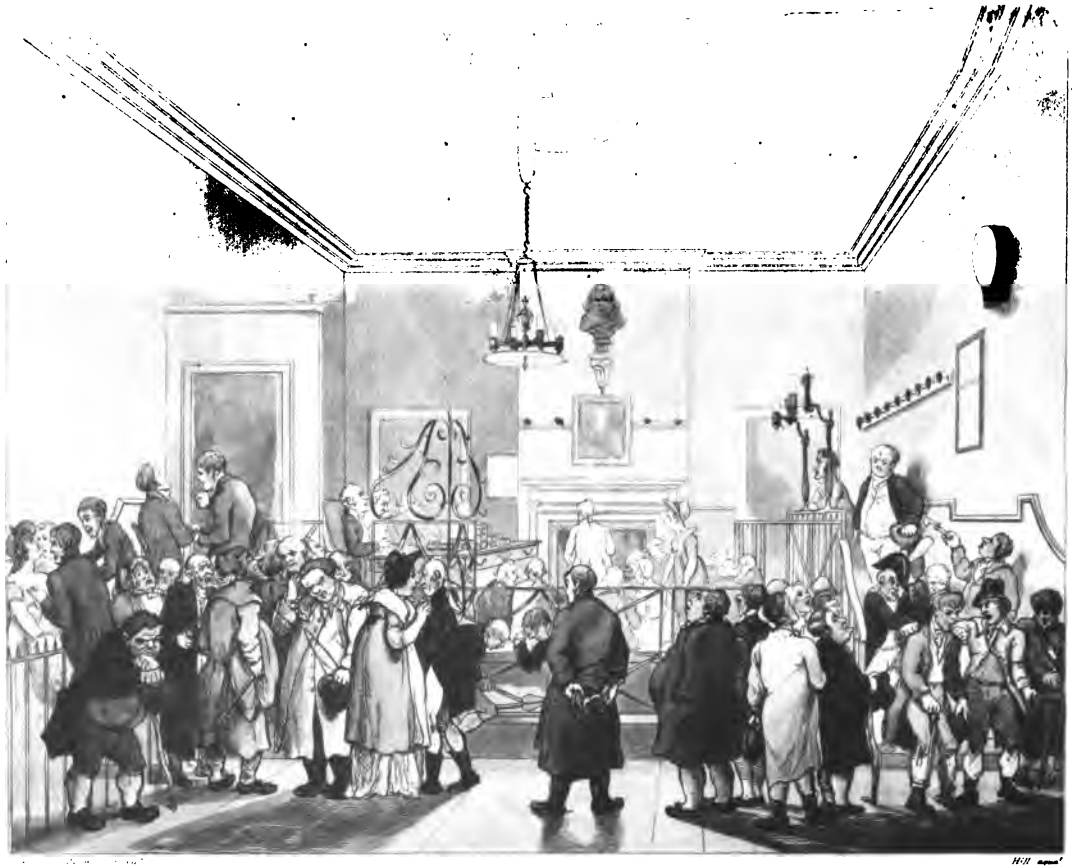

BOW STREET OFFICE.

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CHAPTER VIII.

ECCENTRICITY.

§ *The Rival Bedouins.*

THERE was something highly farcical in a theatrical dispute which was taken to Bow Street for settlement. Mr. Braham in 1833 or 1834 had engaged what were called "The Bedouin Arabs," to perform at the once popular Colliseum in the Regent's Park; when Ducrow, who was installed at Astley's, put out advertisements announcing a similar entertainment, but performed by a much larger contingent of "Genuine Bedouin Arabs." Braham, who had gone to a large expense to secure his Arabs, took the extraordinary step of applying at Bow Street for a warrant to stop Mr. Astley's performances. Ducrow was an eccentric personage enough, and I believe was the author of the sagacious speech "Cut out the dialect and come to the 'osses!"—the pith and moment of all dramatic compositions. Indignant at the attempt to stop his performances, he issued this racy

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proclamation, which is really delightful for its spirit, coarse contempt, and a sort of "horse-coper's" raillery.

"Extraordinary Equestrian and Gymnastic Arab Feats! Surpasses anything of the kind ever produced. The public are respectfully informed that these are not the four black men who play without their shoes and stockings at the west end of the town, but upwards of forty British artists, that challenge all Europe for talent, variety, extraordinary feats of manly skill and activity, and who nightly receive thunders of applause from crowded audiences, and do not play to a dozen of daily loungers. The union of talent and Arab spectacles of this establishment does not confine itself to the tumbling of four great ugly blacks, who have been refused an engagement at Astley's, because there are so many superior and more extraordinary men of our own country nearly starving, and compelled to perform on an open race-course for a penny, whilst those four men can get one hundred pounds per week, because they are black, and foreigners.

"The reader no doubt has witnessed boys running alongside of a coach, doing what is termed 'cat-in-wheel,' and turning foresprings with one hand and then the other; or throwing summersets from a sand-bank. Such is the grand performances of these Sauteurs, consisting of three or four blacks, who walk on their hands, with their naked feet in the air, like

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two black frying-pans (of course no lady or respectable person can sit and see this).

"These blacks, with the man who takes half their money, applied at Bow Street to ask if they could not prevent Astley's from using the word 'Arab Exercises,' for that the public went every night and filled Astley's, and never came to see them at all! Why, of course, the public are the best judges, and know the difference between seeing a spectacle in character, produced with splendour, to introduce the talents of the flying man, the equilibrists, elastic tumblers, the antipodeans, jugglers, dancers, men and horses, tableaux, the groups of trained horses, and other novelties! But come, see, and judge for yourselves; for this is only a small part of Astley's entertainments."

§ "*Mine Host and his Waiter.*"

Enter Mr. OXBERRY, *in a long plaid cloak turned up with black velvet, as Landlord of the* Craven's Head Tavern, Drury Lane—WILLIAM CLUFF, *his waiter*—Attendants, Officers, &c.

Cluff: And please your worship, I am a waiter, what waits at taverns and places. T'other day Mr. Oxberry had a dinner of twenty-one at his house, the Craven's Head, your worship, hard by; and I was engaged to wait upon 'em, which I accomplished to every gentleman's satisfaction, I believe; and if I did

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not, many of 'em are here present, and let 'em speak to it. After dinner, saving your worship's presence, a dessert was ordered for twenty-one, at sixpence a head; and I set it out very handsomely, as I always do. Then, your worship, I handed the plate to the chairman for the sixpence a-head, and he very kindly told me to bring another plate for something for the waiter—that's *me*, your worship. When the bell rung, I goes up, your worship; and the chairman says to me, says he, "Here, waiter, there's sixteen shillings—for the dessert, and the rest for yourself." "Thank you, sir," says I. "Oh, no thanks," says he—"You've been vastly attentive, and it's due to you." With that, your worship, I takes my half to myself, and takes the other half—eight shillings—your worship, to the bar; whereby Mr. Oxberry blowed me up, and said a dessert for twenty-one, at sixpence a-head, comes to ten and sixpence. "Very well," says I, "Sir, I can't help it—the gentlemen have done all what they pleased." So then, your worship, without no more provocation than this here, Mr. Oxberry said I should pay for three plates and one glass, what the gentlemen broke; and says I to Mr. Oxberry, says I—

Magistrate: The warrant charges Mr. Oxberry with assaulting and beating you—I do not want to hear about your plates and dishes—come to the assault at once.

Cluff: Well, your worship, by that means Mr.

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Oxberry goes upstairs, and I heard him telling the gentlemen that I should say they were all a parcel of *scaly* fellows; whereby I told him it was a *lie;* by which means he laid hold of my collar and shook me, and hit me two or three times, your worship, while the other gentlemen held me.

Magistrate: And as far as I can judge at present, you richly deserve to be shaken.

Mr. Oxberry: Your worship; this fellow—

Magistrate: Keep your temper, Mr. Oxberry.

Mr. Oxberry: Your worship, I will endeavour. This person, who has been haunting my house this fortnight for employment, I engaged, as he says, to wait upon a little dinner I had at my house. I am a publican, sir—

Cluff: And sinner. (*aside*)

Mr. Oxberry: After dinner he came down to me, complaining him that the company had not paid him; whereupon I went upstairs and told them what he had said,—that they were a parcel of *shabby* fellows.

Magistrate: There you were wrong, Mr. Oxberry. I think the person who repeats a hasty expression, as bad almost as the first utterer of it.

Mr. Oxberry: Your worship, I admit it. But I had no sooner uttered the words, then he pops into the room, and calls me a *liar!* and I very naturally ordered him out of my house; but I never struck him. On the contrary, he struck *me.*

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Betty Chambermaid: Your worship, I saw the waiter, Mr. Cluff, come into the room and call master a liar, and strike him—quite in a passion, your worship.

First Gentleman: I substantiate what Betty Chambermaid has said. Certainly the waiter struck Mr. Oxberry, and Mr. Oxberry did not strike the waiter.

Second Gentleman: That's *very* true.

Cluff: Your worship, these are all Mr. Oxberry's friends. Besides, Mr. Oxberry always serves his waiters so.

Magistrate: Then you expected he would beat you when you asked him for employment?

Cluff: Your worship, I knew I run great risk of it.

Magistrate: The warrant is dismissed. Good morning to you, Mr. Oxberry. [*Exeunt Omnes.*

§ *Furious Frank.*

"The close of the business at Bow Street office was enlivened, "to a degree," by the eccentricities of a person who called himself, in the first instance, "Captain Frank Brigges, of the Royal Navy, and a gentleman—*hiccup.*" It afterwards appeared, however, that he was not of the Royal Navy, but of the Bombay service; and as to his gentility, he was cer-

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tainly, for that night at least, the most ungentle gentleman we ever saw.

It seems that at half-past eight the same evening, he presented himself in the box-lobby of the second circle at Drury Lane Theatre, and demanded to be shown to "a d—l—sh good box." He was shown to a box accordingly; but whether a "d—l—sh good one," or not, did not appear. We should rather suppose not; for he had not been seated many minutes before he began to manifest symptoms of dissatisfaction. One moment he turned his left side to the stage; then he turned the right side; and, this not being to his mind, he turned his legs behind him, as an Emeralder might say, and placed his back towards the stage. This position did not please him long, and he tried to stand upright; but the perpendicular was past his power; and after *swaying* backwards and forwards and sideways, like a Lombardy poplar in a chopping wind, he came down with a lee-lurch, and seated himself on the blooming shoulders of a comely dame on the seat below him. All these varieties of position he accompanied with critical comments on the players, the house, the lights, and the ladies; and when remonstrated with by the gentlemen in the surrounding boxes, he boldly retorted, "D—mme, arn't I an *Englishman!*" At length, when he seated himself on the lady's shoulders as aforesaid, the box-keepers were desired to interfere; but they, not being able to quiet

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him, called in Harradine, one of the patrole, employed at the theatre as a constable. Harradine endeavoured to prevail upon him to be quiet, but he was answered with a "d—mme, arn't I an Englishman!" There was now a general cry of "Turn him out!" and Harradine proceeded to remove him. He came out into the lobby quietly enough; but he was no sooner here, than he "showed fight," refusing to stir an inch further, and challenging "all the world."

The uproar he caused made it necessary, for the peace of the audience, that he should be removed from the theatre, and Harradine took him into custody; in doing which that officer not only received several blows within the house, but was twice fairly, or rather *foully*, knocked down in the street before he could get him to the door of the office. Finding himself at the door of the office, he became ten times more furious than before, and kicked and plunged with such violence, that the bringing him into the presence of the magistrate was more like bringing a mad bull to the stake than anything else we can compare it to; and, like a mad bull, too, he commenced a *roaring* remonstrance against his detention, as soon as he perceived himself before the magistrate. The magistrate endeavoured to prevail upon him to be quiet, that he might hear the charge against him; and with some difficulty he succeeded; but the enraged captain had not been silent more than a minute before he let fly his fist in the face

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of Goodwin, an officer who had nothing at all to do with him, and who was standing quietly by the magisterial table.

"Lock him up!" said his worship, in whose immediate presence this irreverent and wanton act of violence was perpetrated—"Let him be locked up instantly;" and now came the tug of war. The captain threw himself into an attitude of defiance, "his very look an oath," and his eyes flashing fire: three or four officers sprung upon him; the captain forced himself out of their grasp; they again seized him, and began tugging him towards the door, he catching at everything in his way, and clinging to every hold he made with astonishing tenacity; and, what was very curious, he seemed to take hold of any projection with his feet, as firmly as he did with his hands. This scene continued nearly five tedious minutes—nothing but sheer silent tugging on one side, and screaming resistance on the other; and when at length the captain's strength was exhausted, and he was left locked up in the dark by himself, he set up a long continuous howl, so loud and dissonant, that we can compare it to nothing but a concert of half-a-dozen donkeys, "when first the soul of *love* is sent abroad" amongst them, on some fine spring evening. For more than a quarter of an hour did he continue this asinine serenade, *sans intermission;* and all the courts and avenues of Bow Street "rebellow'd to the roar."

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Meantime, Harradine and the box-keepers gave their evidence, and then the captain was brought in again to hear it read. He appeared now with a pair of highly-polished very handsome handcuffs on his wrists; but, notwithstanding their brightness, it was evident they annoyed him sadly. Indeed he was quite an altered man—his blustering had vanished like the bursting of a bubble, and his bellowing had dwindled to a blubber. He approached the table between two officers, holding up his manacled hands to the magistrate, and whimpered out, "Only see here, sir, how they've served me!"

The magistrate told him he was very sorry to see a *gentleman* decorated in such a manner, but he had brought it upon himself.

The captain gave a long "*Oh!*" and the clerk began to read over the evidence, but the captain was too much distressed both in mind and body to attend to it; and he continued—sometimes in a deep *bass* voice, and sometimes in a squeaking *treble*, alternately deploring and deprecating the whole proceeding. "I pledge you my honour, sir," said he, in *bass*, "that I have done nothing worthy of this coercion." Then instantly going off into a *treble*, he exclaimed, "Oh! my dear kind Mr. Magistrate, do intercede for an unfortunate gentleman—do, God bless you!—now do, that's a kind dear soul!" Then *bass* again, "Upon the word of a gentleman, sir, I am not drunk.—Upon my honour, I

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have drunk nothing but water these ten days." Then *treble* again, "Oh! you d—d rascally officers, what have you used me in this manner for? Only look here, your worship—see here, what the rascals have put upon my poor hands! let me go home, and I'll go down on my knees to you, you kind, dear, kind, very kind gentleman!—I'll give you any money if you'll only let me go!" *Bass* again, "I have certainly been used extremely ill, without having given the slightest provocation to anybody," &c., &c.

Meanwhile "the big round tears coursed each other down his purple nose in piteous chase," mingling with other nameless matters, which the gaoler, who stood by his side, wiped away from time to time, for decency sake; and, at length, the magistrate—finding there was no chance of getting him to attend to the evidence—ordered that he should be taken to the watch-house, and be brought up again in the morning.

He was taken accordingly, without much difficulty, and, to cut short a story already far too long, when he was brought up on the following morning, he was so excessively contrite, that he was forgiven by all parties, and allowed to go home, and get "a plaister for his broken coxcomb."

§ *Lord Mansfield's Wig.*

The following history connected with Lord Mans-

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field's wig is truly amusing from the dramatic display of characters on both sides.

"It appeared that a barber called Williams had obtained a summons against the defendant, who is clerk to Mr. Reeves, an attorney in Tottenham Court Road, calling upon him to attend on a given day, to show cause why he should not pay a debt of 39*s.* 11¾*d.*

Mr. Williams, who spoke with a sort of lisping squeak, garrulously addressed the commissioner: "He had," he said, "been a hair-dresser, man and boy, for sixty-eight years. He had served his time in the Temple, where he had had the honour of making wigs for some of the greatest men as ever lived—of all professions, and of all ranks—judges, barristers, and commoners—churchmen as well as laymen—illiterate men as well as literate men; and, among the latter, he had to rank the immortal Dr. Johnson. But of all the wigs he had ever set comb to, there was none on which he so much prided himself as a full state wig which he had made for Lord Mansfield. It was one of the earliest proofs of his genius; it had excited the warm commendation of his master, and the envy of his brother shopmates; but, above all, it had pleased, nay, even delighted, the noble and learned judge himself. Oh! gemmen," exclaimed Mr. Williams, "if you had known what joy I felt when I first saw his noble lordship on the bench with that wig on his head!" (in an under-tone, but rubbing his hands with ecstasy)

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—"Upon my say so, I was fuddled for the three days after!"

The Commissioner: What has this wig to do with the defendant's debt?

Mr. Williams: A great deal: that's the very bone of contention.

The Commissioner: Doubtless; but you must come to the marrow, if you can, as soon as you can.

Mr. Williams: I will. Well, as I was a saying—where did I leave off?—Oh! when I was fuddled.

The Commissioner: I hope you have left off that habit, now, my good man.

Mr. Williams: Upon my say so, I have, trust me; but as I was a saying, to make a long story short, in course of time I left my master in the Temple, set up for myself, and did a great stroke of business. Ay, I could tell you such a list of customers. There was—

The Commissioner: Never mind, we don't want your list—go on.

Mr. Williams: Well, then, at last I set up in Boswell Court, Queen Square. Lawk me! what alterations I have seen in that Square, surely, in my time. I remember when I used to go to shave old Lord—

The Commissioner: For God's sake, do come to the end of your story.

Mr. Williams: Well, I will. Where was I? Oh! in Boswell Court—[*Commissioner*, aside: I wish you were there now.]—Well, then, you must know when

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Lord Mansfield (God rest his soul!) died, his wig—the very, very wig I made—got back to my old master's shop, and he kept it as a pattern for other judges' wigs; and at last, who should die but my master himself. Ay, it's what we must all come to.

The Commissioner: Go on, go on, man, and come to the end of your story.

Mr. Williams: I will, I will. Well, where was I? Oh! in my poor master's shop. Well, so when he died, my mistress gave me—for she knew, poor soul! how I loved it—this 'dentical wig; and I carried it home with as much delight as if it had been one of my children. Ah, poor little things! they're all gone before me.

The Commissioner: Come, if you don't cut this matter short, I must, and send you after them.

Mr. Williams: Dearee me! you put me out. Well, as I was a saying, I kept this here wig as the apple of my eye; when, as ill-luck would have it, that 'ere Mr. Lawrence came to my shop, and often asked me to lend it to him to act with in a play—I think he called it Shycock, or Shylock, for he said he was to play the judge. I long refused, but he over-persuaded me, and on an unlucky day I let him have it, and have never (weeping and wiping his little eye with his white apron) seen it since.

The Commissioner: And so you have summoned him for the price of this wig?

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Mr. Williams: You have just hit the nail on the head.

The Commissioner: Well, Mr. Lawrence, what have you to say to this?

Mr. Lawrence (with great pomposity): Why, sir, I have a great deal to say.

The Commissioner: Well, then, sir, I desire you will say as little as you can, for there are a great many persons waiting here whose time is very precious.

Mr. Lawrence: Not more precious than mine, I presume, sir. I submit that this case is in the nature of an action of trover, to recover the possession of this wig; and this admitted, sir, I have humbly to contend, that the plaintiff must be nonsuited; for, sir, you will not find one word of or concerning a wig in his declaration. The plaintiff must not travel out of his record.

The Commissioner: What record?

Mr. Lawrence: The record in Court.

The Commissioner: We have no record.

Mr. Lawrence: You have a summons, on which I attend to defend myself; and that is, to all intents and purposes, *de facto*, as well as *de jure*, a record similar to, and of the essence of, a record in the Court above.

The Commissioner: Sir, we are not guided by the precedents of Courts above here. Our jurisdiction and our powers are defined by particular Acts of Parliament.

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Mr. Lawrence: Sir, I contend, according to the common law of these realms, that I am right.

The Commissioner: I say, according to the rules of common sense, you are wrong.

Mr. Lawrence: Sir, I have cases.

The Commissioner: Sir, I desire you will confine yourself to this case.

Mr. Lawrence: What says Kitty upon the nature of these pleadings?

The Commissioner: And pray, who is Kitty?

Mr. Lawrence: The most eminent pleader of the present day.

The Commissioner: I never heard of a woman being a special pleader.

Mr. Lawrence: He is not a woman, sir; he is a man, sir, and a great man, sir—and a man, sir—

The Commissioner: Do you mean Mr. Chitty?

Mr. Lawrence: I mean the gentleman *you* call Chitty, and most erroneously so call him; for you ought to know that the *Ch* in Italian sounds like an English K; and Mr. Kitty, by lineal descent, is an Italian. It is a vulgar error to spell his name with a y final, it ought to be i, and then it would properly sound Kitty.

The Commissioner: I should rather take Mr. Chitty's authority for this than yours.

Mr. Lawrence (in anger): Sir, do you contradict me?

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The Commissioner: Sir, I will bring this case to a short issue. Did you borrow this man's wig?

Mr. Lawrence: I did.

The Commissioner: Do you choose to return it?

Mr. Lawrence: It is destroyed.

The Commissioner: How destroyed?

Mr. Lawrence: It was burnt by accident.

The Commissioner: Who burnt it?

Mr. Lawrence: I did, in performing the part of the *Judge* in Shakspeare's inimitable play of the *Merchant of Venice.* While too intent on the pleadings of *Portia,* the candle caught the curls, and I, with difficulty, escaped having my eyes burnt out.

The plaintiff here uttered an ejaculation of mental suffering, something between a groan and a curse.

The Commissioner: Well then, sir, I have only to tell you, you are responsible for the property thus intrusted to your care; and, without farther comment, I order and adjudge that you pay to the plaintiff the sum of 39*s.* 11¾*d.*, which is the sum he is prepared to swear it is worth.

Mr. Williams: Swear! Lord love you, I'd swear it was worth a Jew's eye. Indeed, no money can compensate me for its loss.

The Commissioner: I cannot order you a Jew's eye, Mr. Williams, unless Mr. Lawrence can persuade his friend Shylock to part with one of his; but I will order you such a sum in monies numbered,

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as you will swear this wig is fairly and honestly worth.

A long dispute followed, as to the value of the wig, when Mr. Williams ultimately agreed to take 20*s.* and costs, and the parties were dismissed, mutually grumbling at each other.

§ *A Great Man in Distress.*

There is a certain Shandean pathos in the following: A personage, who described himself as "General Sarsfield Lucan, Viscount Kilmallock in Ireland, a peer of France, and a descendant of Charlemagne," presented himself before the magistrate to solicit a few shillings to enable him to proceed on important business to Wexford.

General Sarsfield Lucan wore an old brown surtout, with the collar turned up behind to keep his neck warm, and a scrap of dirty white ribbon fastened to one of the button-holes; a black velvet waistcoat, powdered with tarnished silver *fleurs-de-lis*, and an ancient well-worn *chapeau bras*, surmounted with a fringe of black feathers. He carried under his arm a large roll of writings, and all his pockets were stuffed with tin cases, pocket-books, and bundles of papers: his "fell of hair" was ruefully matted; an enormous tawny whisker covered either cheek and his upper lip and chin,—which, for want of shaving, "showed like a

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stubble-field at harvest home,"—was all begrimed with real Scotch.

He said he was a native of Wexford in Ireland, and had spent the last seven years in Paris, where his cousin, Louis XVIII., nominated him a peer, and gave him a decoration (the bit of white ribbon above mentioned); but his instalment had been postponed by the then recent change in the ministry; his cousin (Louis XVIII.) assuring him, that as soon as his present ministers were kicked out, he should come in. In the meantime his father had died, and willed him certain lands and houses in Wexford; whereupon he wrote to his sisters, who were resident there, to desire them to send him the proceeds of his estates forthwith; but instead of so doing, they had themselves administered to the will, and were dissipating his patrimony. Under these circumstances, his cousin, the king, advised him to set out immediately for Ireland, and seek redress in person. "Journeying with this intent," he landed at Dover a few days before, but on reaching London he found his finances exhausted, and he was now driven to the unpleasant necessity of applying to their worships for a few shillings to enable him to proceed.

Sir R. Birnie said, he wondered his royal cousin had not furnished him with the means of prosecuting his journey.

"Sir! I scorned to trouble him at all on such a

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palthry subject as money," replied the general, with some warmth; and he then went on to state, that in order to satisfy his coach-hire from Dover to London he had been necessitated to give up possession of his working tools.

"Your *working tools!*" said the magistrate; "and pray may I ask what trade your lordship follows?"

"No trade in the world at all," replied the general; "I am not the person to be after following trades.—The tools I am *spaking* about are what I used in some of the greatest inventions the world ever saw. I invented a *happaratus* for extracting stone and gravel from the *blather* without any operation at all. I invented a machine for fishing up vessels foundered at sea, as *aisy* as fishing up an oyster; and I invented another machine for making *accouchement* the most *aisy* thing in existence—a mere *fla-bite* to the most tender lady imaginable! And it was partly these inventions, indeed, that brought me to this country now—because I did not choose to be giving foreigners the benefit of them."

"Pray, sir," said Mr. Minshull, "will you give me leave to ask whether you were ever confined?"

The General: Confined! for what would I be confined?

Mr. Minshull: If you do not understand the nature of my question I am sorry I put it; but it certainly appeared to me possible that——

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The General: Sir, you appear to me to be after *taalking* in a very queer kind of a way to a *jontleman!* You ought to know what is due to a respectable and *graat* man, even though he is in distress.

Mr. Minshull: Well, sir, I will speak as plainly to you as you do to me. It is my opinion, and the opinion, I believe, of every person present, that you are out of your mind; and that if you have never been confined it is high time you were so.

The General angrily declared he was altogether *mens sana in corpore sano;* and professed himself astonished that anybody should entertain a contrary opinion; then taking from his side-pocket a round tin case, nearly as large as a demi-culverin, he offered to produce from it documents to show that he was really the important personage he professed himself to be.

The magistrates, however, had no faith in the matter; they told him it might be all very true, but they had no funds to assist him with; and, as he appeared very incredulous on this subject, they at length ordered him to withdraw upon pain of being committed to prison under the Vagrant Act.

This was an awful alternative, which the gallant "General" did not think proper to risk; so gathering up his patents and papers, he put his feather-fringed *chapeau* upon his head, and taking an ample pinch of snuff—so ample, indeed, that it rushed through his olfactory labyrinth with the noise of a mighty cataract

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—he stalked majestically out of the office, muttering anathemas as he went.

§ *A Hideous Plot.*

Simple and unpretending in its details as the following story may be considered, it is doubtful if any more revolting picture of villainy can be found in the Newgate Calendar.

"In October, 1838, a merchant of the City, whom we shall call Mr. Goldsmith, had two clerks in his counting-house who were the sons of early friends, who left them destitute orphans much about the same time. Mr. Goldsmith had treated them as his own children. One was named Henry Wilkinson, and the other John Simpson Betts. Mr. Goldsmith had an only daughter, Emily, to whom he had intended one of his clerks should be married; a circumstance, in fact, which he had for some years past communicated to the boys themselves, telling them at the same time, that his daughter would be left to her unrestricted choice, and that it would depend upon themselves which would be the happy man. Her choice fell upon the younger, Betts. This decision, it appears, wounded the other's feelings so much that he was resolved upon revenge; and never did the devil suggest to the human heart a plan of revenge more diabolical than the one which Wilkinson conceived and put into execution.

For the furtherance of his scheme, Wilkinson became

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deeply connected with a nest of blacklegs at one of the hells in the Quadrant, by whose assistance he was enabled to carry his operations into effect. The charge of Goldsmith's books was divided between the two clerks, Wilkinson keeping the journal and ledger, and Betts the cash and day books. It was also the duty of Betts to keep the bankers' book, and to draw the checks which were signed by Goldsmith, a private mark being placed upon a particular part of the check in order to guard against forgery. With this private mark Wilkinson was well acquainted, and early in the beginning of last August he *forged* a check in Mr. Goldsmith's name upon the bankers for fifty pounds, which he received in one note, the number and date of which he carefully noted down. It appeared that it was Goldsmith's custom to send for his bankers' book at the end of every month in order to agree and balance it with his own cash book; so that Wilkinson knew that nearly a month would have to elapse before the forgery would be discovered, which gave him ample time to secure his object. As soon as he had got the fifty pound note he went with it to his companions at the hell, by whom in the course of a few days he was furnished with a forged counterpart, corresponding in every respect with the genuine note, and bearing exactly the same date and number. The object of this will be seen presently.

The 1st of September was the day fixed upon

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for the marriage of Miss Goldsmith to Betts, and the 28th of August had already arrived, when Wilkinson, who had been the whole preceding part of the month endeavouring to persuade Betts to make a visit to the gambling-table in question, at length succeeded in getting him there on the evening of that day under a special promise that he was not to be asked to play. Champagne, however, did its work, and Betts was drawn into the snare. He played and *won* fifty pounds. The forged note for that amount was paid him by the loser, whose services in losing the money with the assistance of his confederates, had been remunerated with the genuine note. Wilkinson whispered into his ear that *now* was the lucky time to leave off. The note was to be a handsome present to Emily on her wedding day. Betts took his advice, and they left the hell together—Betts, to make preparations for his departure next morning for the country house at Windsor, and Wilkinson to complete his revenge.

The happy party at Windsor were already in the church, and the clergyman was about to commence the ceremony, when Wilkinson rushed in, apparently breathless, and desired a moment's conference with Mr. Goldsmith. He then produced a letter from that gentleman's bankers, which stated that a check for fifty pounds had been forged in his name, and that they had reason to suspect one of his clerks of the act,

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because the private mark was upon the check. Thunderstruck by this intelligence, the old man inquired of Betts if he knew anything about it; but while he was making denial, Miss Goldsmith, who did not like the appearance of things, joined the trio, and very quickly settled the matter by the production of the note which Betts had given her, and which, of course, corresponded exactly with the description furnished by the bankers. All doubt was now at an end; the ceremony was abruptly interrupted and the parties retired; Emily, Wilkinson, and Mr. Goldsmith to the house of the latter, and Betts to the station-house under the charge of a policeman.

The case was investigated by Sir R. Birnie, who displayed more than his usual acuteness. With the assistance of Mr. Goldsmith he established a well-conducted inquiry. The plan he adopted was this. He persuaded Mr. Goldsmith to offer privately a reward of one hundred pounds to any one who was present at the gaming-table on the night when the money was lost. A needy swindler came forward and divulged the whole. Wilkinson was now called upon for an explanation, but was missing. It is supposed that he got on board a steamboat—for France or for Amsterdam. The proceedings in this matter have been kept so secret that no notice has been nor will be taken of them in the papers. One great good, however, has come of them—a regular manufactory of forged notes

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has been discovered, the particulars of which will in due time come before the public."

§ *Mysterious Visitors.*

Sometimes extraordinary personages came to the magistrates: they were always received with respect and due allowance. As on a Wednesday morning in March, 1821, when a lady alighted from a travelling-chariot at the door, and requested to be shown in immediately. The carriage had an imperial on the top, and was covered with dust. The lady herself was apparently of middle age, and a slight genteel figure; but she bore in her countenance strong marks of a fixed melancholy. She wore a blue riding-habit, with a black beaver riding-hat; and her whole person was nearly covered with a large black lace veil. One of the clerks immediately conducted her to the magistrate, who politely requested her to take a seat; but she declined it with a melancholy ejaculation of the simple monosyllable "No;" at the same time motioning him, with a graceful wafture of her hand, to proceed with what he was about. The magistrate, somewhat alarmed at her manner, requested her, since she would not sit down, to walk round to the other side of the table. She did so; and the other business before the magistrate being almost immediately disposed of, he said, "Now, madam, I will hear what you have to say."

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She replied nearly as follows :—"I have only to place in your hands these pamphlets, containing matter of deep interest, such as fraud, felony, and presumptive murder; and to request you will make them public, preparatory to a public and great event.

These words were delivered in a tone of the most profound melancholy, and at the same time with the firmness of one accustomed to dictate and to be obeyed. She then handed to the magistrate two quarto pamphlets, one of which appeared, by the title-page, to be an investigation into the conduct of a certain reverend gentleman; and both of them seemed to have their margins nearly covered with writing. The magistrate, taking the books, observed that he had not time to peruse them at that moment; he would look into them at the first convenient opportunity.—"*Do so!*" instantly rejoined the lady in an authoritative manner; "*Do so!* but give them publicity—promise?" The magistrate, "I assure you, madam, I will look into them; and I will do what is right." To this the lady, dropping her voice to its former melancholy tone, replied, "I believe you, from what I have observed; I believe you. Farewell!" And having so said, she returned to her carriage, and drove off at a rapid pace; no one at the office knowing who she was, whence she came, where she went to, nor scarcely what she wanted.

In 1827 another "mysterious case" occupied the

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attention of the court for a short time. In those days there were many cases which, as it were, flitted past and were heard of no more. The magistrates seem to have been accessible enough and were willing to give advice, or perhaps wished to distract the monotony of their duties. Thus one day a young man of highly interesting appearance, applied at this office to solicit the magistrate's advice, under the following novel and very mysterious circumstances :—

He stated that he had never been blessed with parental solicitude and tenderness, having from his infancy, until very lately, lived with a laundress in the Temple, named Elm, who received a liberal allowance for his maintenance down to the period of her death, an event that took place about six months ago, when the allowance ceased, and he was thrown destitute on the world. His lamented protectress had frequently stated that his friends were of elevated rank, and that he ought to have the enjoyment of an ample fortune, out of which he was kept, she said, by the turpitude of some individuals. She died without having furnished the applicant with any clue by which he could discover his parents. All he knew concerning his birth was, that he was born in the house of a surgeon, named Bradford, who, at that time, resided contiguous to the Kent Road. During Mr. Bradford's lifetime, the money allowed to Mrs. Elm for the applicant's support, came through his hands; and after his

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death, Mrs. Bradford paid it. She declined giving him any further assistance. But he had been told by his protectress, Mrs. Elm, that Mrs. Bradford was the only one living who could afford him any knowledge of his parents; and he hinted that her reasons for declining to do so were pecuniary.

An officer was then directed to wait upon Mrs. Bradford, and to prevail upon her, if possible, to appear at the office. Accordingly the lady presented herself. She was far advanced in years, and appeared a good deal agitated.

Mr. Minshull said, that if she knew anything of the young man's friends, in common justice she ought to disclose it. Mrs. Bradford denied that she knew anything of them.

Applicant: Surely, ma'am, you cannot deny having paid me money; and why will you not explain from whom that money came?

Mrs. Bradford: That I'll never explain to you, nor to any one else.

Applicant: Do you not know who my parents are?

Mrs. Bradford (in some confusion): Yes, I know something about them, but I don't choose to tell.

Mr. Minshull: I tell you what, ma'am, you are acting most unnaturally and cruelly, and can be *forced* to give the information required of you, by a Bill in Equity; and I hope this young person will find some solicitor to take up his case.

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Applicant: For God's sake, Mrs. Bradford, tell me who my parents are?

Mrs. Bradford (with increased confusion): Yes, I know something about them, but I cannot tell it.

A gentleman named White, who was sitting on the bench, here interposed: he handed the applicant his card, and bid him call at his house, saying that, from what he had heard and seen, he would do all in his power to unravel the mystery; and if any additional information could be obtained, that he would engage to have a bill filed. Mrs. Bradford was anxious to depose that she had no property belonging to the applicant, and expressed her wish to retire.

Applicant: Mrs. Bradford, before you go, now tell me, have you not told me, on applying to you for money, that you must first speak to my friends? Mrs. Bradford denied that she said so, or that she ever knew his friends.

Mrs. Bradford: Am I at liberty to go?

Mr. Minshull: Certainly, I cannot detain you; but before you depart, I wish you would give this young man the information he seeks.

Mrs. Bradford gave no reply, but hurried out of the office as quickly as she could. Here the matter ends for the present.

Some weeks later further information was obtained. The publication of the particulars of what had occurred at Bow Street created a pretty general public feeling

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in Elm's favour, and throughout the early part of the week crowds of persons assembled round the door of Mrs. Bradford, who now lived in Tottenham Court Road. By the kind interference of a Mr. White, that lady was induced to make a statement in writing of all the facts which she knew of relative to young Elm. On Thursday the whole of the parties appeared at the office, when the young man, having read the document, expressed himself satisfied with the statements it contained, and the case was dismissed.

In 1803, it seems, Mrs. —— lived not very far from Portland Place, and carried on an extensive business. She was a handsome widow, and a person of distinction one day passing by the shop, being struck with her beauty, called in and gave an order. He repeated his visits, and an intimacy commenced, which was carried on for a short time. She urged her *bon ami* to marry her, and was surprised to learn that it was out of his power to make her his wife; but he consented to make her a handsome bonus provided she immediately married some one else. In a few weeks afterwards she was married to Mr. T., the son of a rich tradesman at Oxford, and in five months after the union she gave birth to a boy, which Mrs. Elm received from the mother at Dr. Bradford's house, in Hereford Street, Fitzroy Square, and brought up as her own. She (the mother) died very suddenly a little more than a year

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ago. Young Elm had learned that she was his reputed mother, and he called upon her at the house of her husband, Mr. T., and said to her, "I am the boy you put to nurse with Mrs. Elm, and I am told you are my mother." She was so affected by the unexpected communication, and the sight of the young man, who is stated to resemble her very strongly, that she fell on the floor in a fit, and never recovered the effect of the shock—she was a corpse in a fortnight afterwards, and young Elm, *incog.*, followed her to the grave. It is stated that old Mr. T., of Oxford, the grandfather of Elm, bequeathed a considerable property to his grandson; but the query is, would Elm be able to take under that will?

§ *A Sensitive Singer.*

A celebrated female vocalist appeared to prefer a charge against the proprietor and editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, for a libellous paragraph in that journal, tending to a breach of the peace, and instigating to murder. The paragraph was to the following effect:—

"For our parts, being moderate men, averse from any violent measures, and lovers in all things of gentle counsels, *we should incline to adopt Handel's method of making performers sensible of their faults*, thus described by a writer in the *London*. In the

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days of Handel if a singer gave offence, *he used to take her by the waist and throw her out of the window. This was a laudable practice, and Greatorex should revive it.* It was indeed a laudable practice—throwing singers out of window! This was letting them down a peg to some purpose; aye, in those days a man had some chance of hearing tolerable music, when such judicious means were taken to perfect the performers. If they gave themselves airs, away they went into the street; if they were out of time or tune one moment, they were out of the window the next. This was the true concert pitch. We conceive that sore throats, coughs, and colds, and hoarsenesses were very scarce in those exceeding good old times; those airings from windows must have hardened the constitutions, and braced the nerves finely—we would fain see something of the kind revived. The idea of throwing them out of window seems just the thing. Until some plan of this sort is adopted, we shall have nothing but apologies and disappointments. One decent tumble would cure all the sickness and sulkiness even of the opera company."

Mr. Minshull: Have you, Miss ——, such an opinion on the subject as to enable you to make an affidavit?"

The lady answered that she had.

Mr. Minshull: A professional man will advise you best as to the affidavit you ought to produce.

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Miss ——: I have one prepared, sir. Here it is. It was then put in and read.

"MIDDLESEX to wit. Kitty ——, of ——, in the city of ——, spinster, maketh oath and saith, that William Innel Clement, being a person of an evil and malicious mind and disposition, and unlawfully and maliciously contriving to vilify, disgrace, and injure this deponent, and to provoke her to a breach of the peace, and as this deponent verily believes, to incite the professors, amateurs of music, and others, the subjects of our Lord the King, to commit an outrage upon, and murder this deponent, on the 4th day of October instant, with force and arms, within the said city of Westminster, in the county of Middlesex and elsewhere, did unlawfully print and publish in a certain public newspaper, called the *Morning Chronicle*, a wicked, scandalous, and mischievous libel, of and concerning singers, and the deponent as a singer, that is to say, 'I hope to see those people properly appreciated. In the days of Handel, if a singer gave offence, he used to take her by the waist and throw her out of the window. This was a laudable practice, and Greatorex should revive it. It was indeed a laudable practice. This was the true concert pitch. We would fain see something of the kind revived. Let them down a story by all means,' to the evil example

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of all others, and against the peace of our Lord the King, his crown and dignity.

(Signed) "KITTY ——.

"Sworn before me, Oct. 5, 1825."

Sir Richard Birnie: Really, my dear madam, I think you have no reason whatever for apprehension; ladies are naturally timid, and we know how to make allowance for their fears; but these words which have so dreadfully alarmed you, are those exaggerated expressions which signify nothing, because they say so much, they are as unmeaning as compliments.

Miss —— then went on in the most vehement manner: I—do—on—my—oath—really—and truly —believe—that—the *Morning Chronicle*—had in view —the destruction of me—and I positively swear—that—I—think—my—life—is—in—danger.

Sir Richard Birnie: From whom?

Miss —— (in confusion, and evidently taken by surprise): From the publisher. (Laughter.)

Sir Richard Birnie: What! you think, my dear young lady, Mr. Clement put this libel of the *London* into his paper to incite his publisher to murder you? (Laughter.)

Miss ——: No, I mean the proprietor. (Another laugh.)

Sir Richard Birnie: How?

Miss ——: I only say, and I mean to say that they

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meant in this libel to incite the professors and amateurs of music to do me some grievous bodily harm; I actually, really, and positively do fear for my life.

The gentleman who attended on behalf of the *Morning Chronicle* now said that he was ready to bring forward bail for Mr. Clement if required, but he trusted that Mr. Minshull would exercise his discretion, and dismiss so frivolous and ridiculous a complaint.

The newspapers of 1825 were certainly free and outspoken in their criticisms, but nowadays it would seem to be going a little too far were Mr. Sutherland Edwards or Mr. Davison to suggest such drastic a process for a singer as was done in the *London* and *Morning Chronicle*.

Miss ——: In deciding Mr. Martin's case, which is exactly like mine in every particular, Mr. Minshull had no discretion at all; I believe that is the general impression.

Mr. Minshull: No, I have no discretion at all in cases of this kind; I know my authority, and must require Mr. Clement to put in bail, to keep the peace towards all his Majesty's subjects, and to answer any complaint that Miss —— may prefer against him at the sessions.

Miss ——, on retiring, gave notice that at an early day she should appear to require Messrs. Hunt and Clarke, of Tavistock Street, the publishers of the

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London Magazine, to be held to bail for the atrocious libel and instigation to murder in that journal, as, observed she, "It shall not be said that I make fish of one and flesh of another."

§ "*Boardmen*" *Fifty Years ago.*

Sir Richard once expressed his detestation of the now familiar "harmless, necessary" boardmen, with whom, it will be seen, he was inclined to deal summarily. This was brought out in an amusing dialogue with one of those foolish persons—not wholly unknown in our day—who, under pretence of philanthropy, put aside the laws. Mr. Howard, a respectable Cheapside shopkeeper, had rescued a mendicant from the mendicity officers.

Elisha Pickle, one of the officers referred to, deposed, that having apprehended a notorious impostor begging in St. Martin's Court, he was conducting him to prison, when he made considerable resistance. A mob was in consequence collected, and witness and his brother officer were much abused. Mr. Howard was one of the most active ringleaders of this mob. He collared witness several times, notwithstanding he had produced his authority. Several other persons were almost equally violent, and the impostor, taking advantage of the row, made his escape from their custody. The other officer substantiated this account.

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Mr. Howard being called upon for his defence, retorted the charge of violence upon the officers. They were, he said, dragging the poor fellow along in a most unmerciful manner, he crying out the while, "What is my crime? I am only guilty of being poor, and have only asked for labour." "Moved to pity by these cries, and the wretched appearance of the man," continued Mr. Howard, "I remonstrated with these men on their violent conduct. I told them they had no right to take the man to a prison, for I would that moment take him into my own service. Several respectable persons joined me in these remonstrances, but the officers treated us with contempt, and eventually, I believe, I did lay my hand on the shoulder of the fat officer."

The Magistrate: You say, Mr. Howard, that you would have taken him into your own service. Pray what are you, and what employ would you have given him?

Mr. Howard: I am a boot and shoe maker, residing in Cheapside, but being about to remove from that street, it was my intention to employ him in carrying a board announcing that removal.

The Magistrate: Those board-carriers are some of the greatest nuisances with which the metropolis is infested; and had the officers brought some of yours here they would have been dealt with accordingly.

Mr. Howard replied that nevertheless it was a common practice, and had its advantages. As to the charge in question, he repeatedly assured the magis-

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trate that he had only interfered from motives of humanity.

After some further conversation the magistrate proposed Mr. Howard should accompany the officers before the committee of the society, but one of the society's clerks who was present said such a step would be useless, as the society had determined to prosecute, in the present instance, by way of example, their officers having met with frequent interruption. In consequence of this notification, the magistrate called upon Mr. Howard to find bail to answer the charge elsewhere, and he having no bail ready was locked up.

The streets, indeed, if not so garish with advertisements, hoarding, &c., had special shows of a very painful kind, which have long since passed away. So late as 1830 the shocking spectacle of flogging persons at the cart's tail through the streets of London was often presented. Here was one of these scenes :—

" Shortly after the court had passed sentence, the gates of the Old Bailey yard were unfolded, and the hundreds who had long impeded both the foot and carriage-way, rushed in to be gratified with the sight of a public flogging. The unhappy culprits were Wm. Eames, aged forty-four, and Samuel Hunt, aged thirty-five, who were convicted of stealing a bushel of oats. It appeared to astonish the medical gentlemen in attendance that the culprits bore ninety-one lashes with such apparent fortitude. Our astonishment and indignation were aroused when we saw at the back

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chamber of a house, a matron of seventy, and four damsels in their non-age, laughing at the writhings of their guilty fellow-creatures."

In the previous year a more horrible spectacle still was witnessed. "A poor boy, aged about *thirteen years*, was flogged at the cart's tail, a distance of nearly 150 yards, for stealing a pair of shoes, and his screams after the second lash were heart-rending. He continued to shriek and cry "Oh, Lord! oh, Lord!" during the whole distance, and on being placed in the cart at the conclusion of this *English*, this *Christian* torture, the wretched child seemed too weak to support himself—his back was dreadfully lacerated. A considerable crowd was collected, who, of course (for the frequency of these revolting scenes has not yet totally obliterated the common feelings of humanity) expressed the strongest indignation at the horrid sight. The punishment was inflicted at ten o'clock on Friday morning."

It will be hardly credited what brutal cruelty distinguished some of the pastimes of the lower classes. So recently as the year 1770 it was found necessary to issue the following notice from Bow Street :—

Public Office, Bow Street, Feb. 19, 1770.

A CAUTION.

Next Tuesday, commonly called Shrove Tuesday, being that day on which the humanity of Englishmen

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has been usually disgraced by that no less barbarous than shameful practice of throwing at cocks: Notice is hereby given, that the high constable with the peace-officers in and near this Metropolis, will, according to custom, on that day, by the direction of the magistrates, search throughout their respective jurisdictions, in order to suppress this evil; though one would imagine that a moment's reflection on this diversion, would for ever put an end to it; for what can be more cowardly or dastardly than that of tying so inoffensive, so useful, and so brave an animal to a stake, as a poor cock, till *by large sticks this animal is either totally destroyed, or his limbs so broke that he cannot stand;* nay, *frequently the cruelty does not end here, for when they have no longer a leg to stand on to face their relentless enemies,* they are placed in a hat or pot, till they are totally destroyed. Nay, what is still worse, *pigeons, the emblem of love and tenderness, are on this day wantonly fastened to brick-bats, to share the same fate.* But 'tis to be hoped, that masters of families will carefully represent the heinousness of this offence to their servants and apprentices; and if they should not take the benefit of their advice and this caution, 'tis to be hoped they will be apprehended by the constables, and brought to condign punishment. As, besides the above cruelty, it frequently happens that passengers passing and repassing receive great injuries from the sticks thrown on these occasions.

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The curiously pathetic style of this, so foreign to the cold official strain, should be noted.

Again, in April, 1812, Mr. Birnie and Mr. Nares had before them what was reasonably described as "an extraordinary case."

It appeared that as Croker, belonging to the office, was passing along the Hampstead Road, he observed at a short distance before him, two men on a wall, and directly after, he observed the tallest of them, a stout man about six feet high, hanging by his neck from a lamp-post attached to the wall, being that instant tied up and turned off deliberately by the short man. This very unexpected and extraordinary sight astonished and alarmed the officer. He made up to the spot with all possible speed, and just after he arrived there, the tall man fell to the ground with the handkerchief by which he had been suspended. Croker produced his staff, said he was an officer, and demanded to know of the other man the cause of such extraordinary conduct; in the meantime, the man who had been hanged recovered from the effects of his suspension, got up, and, on finding Croker interfering, gave him a violent blow on his nose, which nearly knocked him backwards. The short man was then endeavouring to make off; however, the officer procured assistance, and both the men were secured and brought to the above office, when the account the fellows gave of themselves was, that they worked together on canals. They had been in company together on the Wednesday afternoon; had

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tossed up with halfpence for money, and afterwards for their clothes; the tall man, who was hanged, won the other's jacket, trousers, and shoes. They then in the most wanton and brutal manner tossed up who should hang the other; the short one won that toss, and they got upon the wall, the one to submit, and the other to carry their savage purpose into execution on the lamp-iron.

They both agreed in this statement: the tall one, who had been hanged, said, if he had won the toss he would have hanged the other. He said he then felt the effects of the experiment on his neck, in consequence of the time he was hanging, and that his eyes were so much swelled that he saw double. Mr. Nares and Mr. Birnie, the magistrates, both expressed their horror and disgust at such conduct and language, and ordered the man who had been hanged to find bail for the violent and unjustifiable assault on the officer, and the short one for hanging the other. Neither of them being provided with bail, they were committed to Bridewell for trial.

In 1833 the magistrates had an opportunity to relieve their *ennui* by having a little comic performance in their court.

At Bow Street, on March 27, 1833, Thos. M'Kean, a respectably attired man, having a strong Scottish accent, was brought before Mr. Halls, the sitting magistrate, charged with an assault.

Mr. Burnaby, the clerk, intimated to Mr. Halls that

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the defendant was the father of an extraordinary Scotch boy, who was said to be gifted with second sight, and also with the power of describing objects in a room which he could not by any possibility see in a direct way.

Mr. Halls said he should like much to see the young Gordon M'Kean, of whom he had heard and read much.

Mr. M'Kean called his son, a fine-looking lad, about eleven years of age, forward, and placing him with his back to the bench, put a handkerchief over his face, and requested the worthy magistrate to consent to an exhibition of his powers for a few minutes, to which Mr. Halls consented.

Mr. Burnaby, the boy being placed as before described, took his watch from his pocket, and said, "What have I got in my hand?" "A watch," was the reply. "What is it made of?" "Gold." "What chain is attached to it?" "None at all," said the boy, "there is a riband to it."

Mr Halls: Can you tell at what hour the hands stand?

Boy: Yes; at twelve.

Mr. Burnaby: More or less?

Boy: Neither more nor less, but precisely twelve.

Mr. Burnaby showed his watch, and the hands were at twelve precisely.

Mr. Burnaby then produced his purse from his pocket, and asked the boy the colour of it, and what it

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contained; and his answers were, without having the least opportunity of turning round towards the bench, that one end of the purse was brown and the other yellow, and that the brown end contained sovereigns and the yellow end silver. Mr. Burnaby admitted the correctness of the description, and taking some silver from his pocket, asked the boy to describe the different pieces. "What is this?" said Mr. Burnaby, taking a sixpence. "Sixpence," said the boy, "and of the date of 1819." "What is the next," said Mr. Burnaby. "A shilling, and dated 1815," was the reply. And when the clerk brought forth another coin, and asked a similar question, the boy said, "That is a sixpence, and of the date of 1817;" and all of these guesses proved to be correct.

It would seem an extraordinary thing now were we to hear of a magistrate entertaining himself and his court with such puerilities.

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CHAPTER IX.

DUELS AND GAMING-HOUSE RAIDS.

§ *A Tragic Encounter.*

One of the saddest instances of the duelling mania came to Bow Street in 1818, when Mr. Theodore O'Callaghan, of Gerrard Street, with Lieut. Newbolt, R.N., his second, and Mr. Thomas Phealan, were brought up for being concerned in a duel with Lieut. Bailey of the 58th Regiment.

The quarrel, it will be seen, had a thoroughly Irish character, and arose "in the most natural way in the wurrold." The two principals, having met to arrange a duel with two "friends," had fallen out in course of the arrangements. The meeting took place at Chalk Farm, and Lieut. Bailey was killed.

Mr. Adams, who occupied a house overlooking the ground, stated that about nine o'clock that morning he was in his bedroom, in the act of dressing himself, when he heard the discharge of two pistols, which induced him to look out of his window: he saw four gentlemen in two fields off his house, near Chalk Farm, whom he considered to be in the act of fighting a

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duel. He finished dressing himself with all possible speed, and hurried off to the spot, to endeavour to prevent the shots being repeated. Just as he arrived at the gate, and was in the act of getting over it, two pistols went off: he observed one of the gentlemen turn round. The three other gentlemen went up to him instantly; two of them supported him on each side; to prevent him from falling each of them held his arms. On his getting, up to them *one of them said to "him they were all friends."* He saw blood running down the trousers of the deceased profusely. The parties inquired of him if there was a house near, to conduct the deceased to it. They supported him to witness's house, which was about 400 or 500 yards off. The deceased appeared to be in a dangerous state. A surgeon was sent for with all possible speed. The deceased was laid on a sofa in his parlour, and while he was lying there he desired Mr. Theodore O'Callaghan to come to him, held out his hand to shake hands with him, and said he had behaved most honourably. The deceased observed that he was sensible he was dying. After this he called the other two prisoners to him, shook hands with them, made similar observations to them, and said he forgave them all. Mr. O'Callaghan, after this, went off to Hampstead to get a coach to convey him from his house; in the meantime Mr. Rodd, a surgeon of Hampstead, arrived, who, after examining the wound, said it was

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impossible to remove him from where he was. The shot had entered on his right side, passed through his intestines, and had all but passed through on the left side, it only being kept from obtruding out by the skin. The shot had carried with it a piece of the cloth of his coat and other garments. The deceased observed to him that the quarrel which had been the cause of the duel was not originally a quarrel of their own, *but it had sprung out of a quarrel of two of their mutual friends, who were to have fought a duel on Sunday, and they were to have been their seconds* (!) The deceased lived about two hours, or two hours and a quarter. All the prisoners paid every possible attention to the deceased during the time he lived. He conversed with them all, particularly with Mr. Phealan, who, the deceased told him, had been his second, or his friend, he could not recollect which. Witness heard him request Mr. Phealan to write to his father the full particulars of the whole affair, who, he understood, lived at Limerick. Mr. Phealan then went off to London to procure more surgical assistance. On his return the deceased had expired. *Mr. Newbolt went in the meantime to inquire for lodgings in the neighbourhood.* Mr. O'Callaghan went to Hampstead to procure a coach. They all appeared anxious to do everything for the deceased, and were not inclined to abscond, but very readily surrendered.

The prisoners were not called upon for any defence.

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The magistrate informed them that the law did not make any distinction in cases of murder, all being considered principals; they must all therefore be detained.

Mr. Birnie added it was in evidence before him that one of the King's subjects had been deprived of life, and upon *primâ facie* evidence it was murder; he had therefore made up his mind that the prisoners must all be committed to Newgate, to take their trial for the murder of Lieut. Bailey.

The prisoners were accordingly conveyed to Newgate.

§ "*Tommy*" *Moore and Jeffrey.*

We may contrast with this the rather farcical issue of Tom Moore's quarrel with Jeffrey, and which the poet recounts with a due sense of the comical turn which the incident took. As is well known, the poet had been incensed by a severely contemptuous article in the *Edinburgh Review*, which he said "had roused his Irish blood;" though at first he did not think of noticing the affront. It is not improbable that the *éclat* of an encounter with so celebrated a person suggested itself. Moore was then a gay adventurer in town, much patronized by the great and fashionable, and a duel would be likely to increase his *prestige*. This view is supported by the fact that he admits feeling no sense of injury. He, however, naively says that the expense of a journey to Edinburgh to fight the reviewer was almost beyond his resources.

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"In this mood of mind," he says, "I returned to London" (this was in the year 1806), "and there, whether by *good* or *ill* luck, but in my own opinion the *former*, there was the identical Jeffrey himself, just arrived on a short visit to his London friends. From Rogers, who had met Jeffrey the day before at dinner at Lord Fincastle's, I learned that the conversation, in the course of the day, having happened to fall upon me, Lord F. was good enough to describe me as possessing 'great amenity of manners;' on which Jeffrey said laughingly, 'I am afraid he would not show much amenity to *me*.'

"The first step I took towards my hostile proceeding was to write to Woolriche, a kind and cool-headed friend of mine, begging of him to join me in town as soon as possible; and intimating in a few words the nature of the services on which I wanted him.

"As Woolriche's answer implied delay and deliberation, it did not suit, of course, my notions of the urgency of the occasion; and I accordingly applied to my old friend Hume, who, without hesitation, agreed to be the bearer of my message. Having now secured my second, I lost no time in drawing up the challenge which he was to deliver; and as actual combat, not parley, was my object, I took care to put it out of the power of my antagonist to explain or retract, even if he was so disposed. After adverting to some assertion contained in the article accusing me, if I recollect right, of a deliberate intention to corrupt the minds of

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my readers, I thus proceeded: 'To this I beg leave to answer, you are a liar; yes, sir, a liar; and I choose to adopt this harsh and vulgar mode of defiance, in order to prevent at once all equivocation between us, and to compel you to adopt for your own satisfaction, that alternative which you might otherwise have hesitated in affording to mine.'

"There was of course but one kind of answer to be given to such a cartel. Hume had been referred by Jeffrey to his friend Mr. Horner, and the meeting was fixed for the following morning at Chalk Farm. Our great difficulty now was where to procure a case of pistols; for Hume, though he had been once, I think, engaged in mortal affray, was possessed of no such implements; and as for *me*, I had once nearly blown off my thumb by discharging an over-loaded pistol, and that was the whole, I believe, of my previous acquaintance with fire-arms. William Spencer being the only one of all my friends whom I thought likely to furnish me with these *sine-qua-non*, I hastened to confide to him my wants, and request his assistance on this point. He told me if I would come to him in the evening, he would have the pistols ready for me.

"I forget where I dined, but I know it was not in company, as Hume had left to me the task of providing powder and bullets, which I bought in the course of the evening at some shop in Bond Street, and in such large quantities, I remember, as would have done for

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a score of duels. I then hastened to Spencer, who, in praising the pistols as he gave them to me, said, 'They are but too good.' I then joined Hume who was waiting for me in a hackney-coach, and proceeded to my lodgings. We had agreed that for every reason, both of convenience and avoidance of suspicion, it would be most prudent for me not to sleep at home; and as Hume was not the man, either then or at any other part of his life, to be able to furnish a friend with an extra pair of clean sheets, I quietly (having let myself in by my key, it being then between twelve and one at night) took the sheets off my own bed, and huddling them up as well as I could, took them away with us in the coach to Hume's.

"I must have slept pretty well; for Hume, I remember, had to wake me in the morning, and the chaise being in readiness, we set off for Chalk Farm. Hume had also taken the precaution of providing a surgeon to be within call. On reaching the ground we found Jeffrey and his party already arrived. I say his 'party,' for although Horner only was with him, there were, as we afterwards found, two or three of his attached friends (and no man, I believe, could ever boast of a greater number) who, in their anxiety for his safety, had accompanied him, and were hovering about the spot. And then was it that, for the first time, my excellent friend Jeffrey and I met face to face. He was standing with the bag, which contained

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the pistols, in his hand, while Horner was looking anxiously around.

"It was agreed that the spot where we found them, which was screened on one side by large trees, would be as good for our purpose as any we could select; and Horner, after expressing some anxiety respecting some men whom he had seen suspiciously hovering about, but who now appeared to have departed, retired with Hume behind the trees, for the purpose of loading the pistols, leaving Jeffrey and myself together.

"All this had occupied but a very few minutes. We, of course, had bowed to each other on meeting; but the first words I recollect to have passed between us was Jeffrey's saying, on our being left together, 'What a beautiful morning it is!' 'Yes,' I answered with a slight smile, 'a morning made for better purposes;' to which his only response was a sort of assenting sigh. As our assistants were not, any more than ourselves, very expert at warlike matters, they were rather slow in their proceedings; and as Jeffrey and I walked up and down together, we came once in sight of their operations: upon which I related to him, as rather *à propos* to the purpose, what Billy Egan, the Irish barrister, once said, when, as he was sauntering about in like manner while the pistols were loading, his antagonist, a fiery little fellow, called out to him angrily to keep his ground. 'Don't make yourself unaisy, my dear fellow,' said Egan; 'sure, isn't it bad enough

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to take the dose, without being by at the mixing up?'

"Jeffrey had scarcely time to smile at this story, when our two friends, issuing from behind the trees, placed us at our respective posts (the distance, I suppose, having been previously measured by them), and put the pistols into our hands. They then retired to a little distance; the pistols were on both sides raised; and we waited but the signal to fire, when some police-officers, whose approach none of us had noticed, and who were within a second of being too late, rushed out from a hedge behind Jeffrey; and one of them, striking at Jeffrey's pistol with his staff, knocked it to some distance into the field, while another running over to me, took possession also of mine. We were then replaced in our respective carriages, and conveyed, crestfallen, to Bow Street.

"On our way thither Hume told me, that from Horner not knowing anything about the loading of pistols, he had been obliged to help him in the operation, and in fact to take upon himself chiefly the task of loading both pistols. When we arrived at Bow Street, the first step of both parties was to despatch messengers to procure some friends to bail us; and as William Spencer was already acquainted with the transaction, to him I applied on my part, and requested that he would lose no time in coming to me. In the meanwhile we were all shown into a sitting-room, the people

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in attendance having first inquired whether it was our wish to be separated, but neither party having expressed any desire to that effect, we were all put together in the same room. Here conversation upon some literary subject, I forget what, soon ensued, in which I myself took only the brief and occasional share, beyond which, at that time of my life, I seldom ventured in general society. But I have been told of his saying, soon after our *rencontre*, that he had taken a fancy to me from the first moment of our meeting together in the field; and I can truly say that my liking for him is of the same early date. After all the usual ceremony of binding over, &c., had been gone through, it was signified to us that we were free to depart, and that our pistols should be restored to us. I was obliged myself to return to Bow Street, in the course of a few hours, for the purpose of getting them. To my surprise, however, the officer refused to deliver them up to me, saying in a manner not very civil, that it appeared to the magistrate there was something unfair intended; as, on examining the pistol taken from me, there was found in it a bullet, while there had been no bullet found in that of Mr. Jeffrey.

"Nothing remained for me (particlarly as Hume had taken his departure) but to go at once to Horner's lodgings and lay all the circumstances before him. I was lucky enough to find him at his chambers; and even at this distance of time, I recollect freshly the

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immediate relief which it afforded me when I heard Horner exclaim, in his honest and manly manner, 'Don't mind what these fellows say. I myself saw your friend put the bullet into Jeffrey's pistol, and shall go with you instantly to the office to set the matter right.' We both then proceeded together to Bow Street, and Horner's statement having removed the magistrate's suspicions, the officers returned to me the pistols, together with the bullet which had been found in one of them."

"William Spencer," Moore wrote in his vexation to Miss Godfrey, "is the cause of this very ill-judged interruption, though he had pledged his honour to keep the matter as secret as the grave. I never can forgive him; for at this moment I would rather have lost a limb than that such a circumstance had happened. And so there is all my fine sentimental letters which I wrote yesterday for posthumous delivery to your sister, you, &c. &c., all gone for nothing, and I made to feel very like a ninny indeed."

It seems that Mr. Spencer dined alone with the Fincastles, and, after dinner, told all the circumstances of the challenge, the loan of the pistols, &c., to Lord Fincastle, who (without, as it appears, communicating his purpose to Spencer) sent information that night of the intended duel to Bow Street.

"The manner," adds Moore, "in which the whole affair was misrepresented in the newspapers of the

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day, is too well known to need any repetition here; but I have been told, and I think it not improbable, that to a countryman of my own (named Q——), who was editor of one of the evening papers, I owed the remarkable concurrence in falsehood which pervaded all the statements on the subject. The report from Bow Street was taken first (as I have heard the story) to the office of the paper in question, and contained a statement of the matter, correctly, thus :— 'In the pistol of one of the parties a bullet was found, and nothing at all in the pistol of the other.' Thinking it a good joke, doubtless, upon literary belligerents, my countryman changed without much difficulty, the word 'bullet' into 'pellet;' and in this altered state the report passed from him to the offices of all the other evening papers."

This incident in these days of nice punctilio was excessively awkward; and had the parties actually exchanged shots and Jeffrey been wounded or killed, Moore's reputation would have been for ever lost. The affair, however, almost led to a second encounter, for many years later, Lord Byron, in his "English Bards," alluded to the incident with the sneer :—

> "When Little's *leadless* pistol met his eye,
> And Bow Street myrmidons stood laughing by."

On which Moore sent him a half-reproachful, half-threatening letter, which, had it not been met in a

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gracious spirit, might have led to recriminations and perhaps to a "meeting". Instead, however, they became fast friends.[1]

§ *A Farcical Duel.*

The lengths to which "affairs of honour" were carried was even better illustrated by the following:—

Mr. Villiers, a fashionably-dressed young gentleman, stated that he and Mr. Thompson, who were both lay students, lived in the same house, and had an equal right to the use of the kitchen, but that some difference arose between them relative to the coal-hole, which could only be settled by a reference to the landlord, as it involved a point of law, and not of honour. He accordingly wrote a letter to Mr. Thompson, to which he received an answer, which, with permission of the magistrate, he would beg leave to read. It was as follows:—

"Monday, 18th July, 1828.

"Sir,—I am truly happy to find that the fears entertained for your life are groundless. I thank you for

[1] The witty lines of that incorrigible jester, Theodore Hook, on this adventure, are not generally known.

"When Anacreon would fight, as the poets have said,
A reverse he displayed in his vapour,
For while all his poems are loaded with *lead*,
His pistols were loaded with *paper*.
For excuses, Anacreon old custom may thank,
The indulgence don't let him abuse,
For the cartridge 'tis known is always made blank,
That is fired away at *Reviews*."

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your note, as I am extremely desirous that our respective rights may be quietly adjusted. Indeed, it has been far from my wish to be under any obligation to you. As you have purchased the furniture of the kitchen, no doubt you have authority to remove them; but still I think it right to mention, that as my landlord granted me my lease with the use of these fixtures, I shall insist on the right which I have so acquired, while they remain; and if you have purchased them under a bad title, that is not my fault. As to the coals, I have instructed my laundress, for whatever purpose she may require a fire, to light one with my coals—and if she should find a fire lighted, then to put on coals out of my cellar, and keep the fire up only on these occasions that will be required for my convenience. I do not feel myself called upon to bring an action against you; but, at the same time, I shall be most happy indeed to defend one. Should you think fit to establish your right to the kitchen and fixtures, by expelling my laundress, as you have threatened to do, I take leave to tell you, that I will hold you responsible in case you shall have recourse to force.

"I remain, sir, your very obedient servant,

"HENRY AUGUSTUS THOMPSON.

"To Fredk. Villiers, Esq., 21, Lincoln's Inn Fields."

This letter created a considerable degree of laughter, in which Mr. Minshull and Sir Richard Birnie heartily

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joined, especially when the writer stated "that he could not *keep up a brisk fire* in consequence of the interruption of Mr. Villiers' servant."

Mr. Thompson here stepped forward, and said he begged to be permitted to explain the transaction. In consequence of the irregularity of Mr. Villiers' servant, I never (said Mr. T.) could get my dinner cooked at a proper hour, and I accordingly remonstrated with Mr. Villiers, but to no purpose, and at length I was driven to the necessity of threatening to horsewhip him on the previous Saturday.

Mr. Minshull: Threatened to horsewhip him! Why, I think that a more serious charge than any the letter contains.

What now escaped from Mr. Villiers, in a quiet tone, as if the thing were a matter of course—is highly amusing.

Mr. Villiers: Oh! your worship, I challenged and fought him for that.

Sir R. Birnie: Fought about what? A coal-hole! Upon my word, there was nothing *slack* about you, I perceive.

Mr. Thompson: Oh yes, Sir Richard—we met at five o'clock on Monday morning, when, after an exchange of *four* shots, I *succeeded* in wounding my antagonist on the breast, and I then felt that my wounded honour was healed, especially when Mr. Villiers made the necessary apology.

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Mr. Minshull: Fought and exchanged four shots, and all about cooking a dinner! From your own confession you have been guilty of a breach of the peace, and I shall hold you to bail.

He accordingly ordered them to find bail, themselves in 500*l.*, and two sureties in 250*l.* each, to keep the peace towards each other for two years.

We find noblemen and gentlemen resorting to taverns around Covent Garden, in lieu of clubs, and engaging in quarrels which led to "affairs of honour." There was a place called "Offley's" in Henrietta Street, which was often the scene of such incidents. Thus in 1821 we find the Right Honourable Lord Clanmorris exhibiting articles of the peace against an officer.

Captain William Wallace, of the army, appeared before the sitting magistrates. Lord Clanmorris stated that he was at Offley's the other night, between twelve and one o'clock, when Captain Wallace entered the room, and advancing towards him said, "You are a coward and a scoundrel; I have published you as such to the world, and am glad to meet you once more that I may tell you so to your face." To this witness replied, "It is quite impossible that anything coming from so infamous a character as you can be noticed by a gentleman." Captain Wallace then said, "You scoundrel, you deserve caning, and I will cane you." He laid his cane over the shoulders of witness, where-

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upon he took up a candlestick and threw it at Captain Wallace; a contest ensued, which was terminated by the interference of the waiters. Captain Wallace said that Lord Clanmorris and he had once been on a footing of intimacy, but his lordship had chosen, some time ago, to brand him with the epithets of "scoundrel," "man of infamous character," &c., behind his back, and afterwards refused to give him any satisfaction. He saw his lordship, on the night in question, and again demanded an explanation; upon its being refused, he certainly did apply the terms that had been mentioned, and told his lordship that he might consider himself caned, but he did not strike him. Lord Clanmorris threw a candlestick, which broke the back of his hand, so that he was obliged to wear it in a sling; and indeed his friends told him he ought to have taken out a warrant against Lord C. He said Lord Clanmorris was particularly scrupulous in his choice of gentlemen to fight with. Mr. Minshull said he should call both upon the complainant and defendant to find sureties for their appearance at the Sessions, and for their good behaviour in the interim.

§ *A Gaming-House Raid.*

Mr. Graham, the magistrate, was concerned in a curious and not undramatic enterprise which seems to have brought him into some discredit.

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The system of rewarding or stimulating the Bow Street officials according to results, led, as was to be expected, to jealousies, on the part of the other officers. It was known that while rewards, &c., were scarcely ever given at their offices, at Bow Street "everything was done liberally and handsomely." There was often shown an eagerness to anticipate or frustrate the Bow Street men when a chance offered. This was illustrated in the course of a "raid" made on a gaming-house in St. James's, and which exhibits the worst and most corrupt features of the Bow Street system. Mr. Nares, one of the magistrates, complained in an amusing way of how his own staff had been tricked and deprived of the fruits of "the job."

"It was reported to me," he said, "that two people got 400*l.* which they ran off with." Asked to recount this incident he said "It was a warrant of Mr. Graham's, and they were brought afterwards before me. *The warrant,* I am sorry to say, *was put into the hands of a foreigner belonging to the Alien Office,* but our officers went with him. *That man, with two more men, rushed in before the officers, and plundered the table at first.* Then our officers came, and found but very little; and then this person, *who had no authority whatever,* searched all the gentlemen who remained in the room, and took the money out of their pockets, and kept a list of that money; and I never could get that man, he was off. I do not know

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where he went to; he never came to account for the money. Adkins was the officer who went with the warrant.

"The warrant was of course served by our constables. These men said they had orders to act upon it, that is, this foreigner and Mr. Capper, belonging to the Alien Office, who went in a uniform, and with a drawn sword. I never heard of such a thing in my life. It was not legal. I never was so angry about anything in my life, and I went to complain to Mr. Beckett about it. This foreigner that took down the list, which was very correct, no doubt, never brought the money forward. I did tell Mr. Beckett that if he did not come, I should not scruple to send a warrant after him. I did not scruple to say that if he had come, and the gentlemen swore to this, I should commit him for a robbery. I sent Adkins repeatedly after this man; I could not find him; what did he do but leave a twenty-pound note for Adkins, and I told Adkins to keep that money till it was called for. Supposed to be left by the foreigner. I think the amount of the money was an hundred and odd pounds. But I can perfectly recollect what Mr. Beckett said. When I was extremely angry about it, he said, '*There! we have got into a gaming-house, and you are jealous that we have found it out.*' The final result was, that the gentlemen were held to bail that were gambling, and I never could get at this foreigner in any way. Mr. Capper told me he

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tried to get at him, and could not, or the money. This was three or four years ago. I do not know the least in the world what became of him. I said to Mr. Alley, who was counsel for the gentlemen, 'Do you find him out, and I will grant a warrant.' The money was seized by Mr. Capper and by this foreigner. We never search the pockets of people for their money, but they were made to pull all their money out of their pockets, and then there was a list taken of the money each party gave up, and this list was sent to me in the morning; and as far as I recollect, Mr. Graham said this person would come with the money, but I never could get him. He spent the money, I suppose, except this twenty pounds which Adkins is to account for. Adkins has the twenty pounds now. I went to Mr. Beckett when I discovered all this, to say I thought this a very simple transaction as could possibly be, and I said that it was a disgrace to the office, and that I was sure neither Mr. Reid nor myself would have granted such a warrant upon the evidence of such a man as that. But I fancy they did not know that Mr. Capper was to go in this uniform; he belonged to some corps. The officer very properly came, and gave the account of it to me directly."

The comments made on this singular affair, which seemed to be illegal in any point of view, were certainly just. "A more extraordinary transaction than that which this upright and honourable magistrate has

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here disclosed never before occurred. An information is lodged against a gaming-house, not in the usual way, before a magistrate, at his residence, or at his office, but, as it appears, at the Secretary of State's office; and the magistrate, Mr. Graham, instead of pursuing the usual mode, by giving the warrant to one of his constables to execute, allows it to be put into the hands of a person who has no right whatever to execute it, and that person a *foreigner*, and to add to the strangeness of the transaction, a foreigner *belonging to the Alien Office*!!! How, be it asked, came Mr. Graham to be selected for this office? Mr. Graham was a favourite at Whitehall: he had *three thousand pounds* lately voted him by parliament, on the motion of Mr. Hiley Addington, Under-Secretary of State, to the utter astonishment of the public. Mr. Graham, it is known, also, was suffered to hold his situation at Bow Street years after he was incapacitated by infirmity from discharging its duties, or even from personal attendance at the office. Another magistrate of the county was employed to attend in his place, on a clear understanding between Mr. Graham and Mr. Beckett, that he should succeed to the first vacancy in the police establishment, and should even be appointed, over the heads of all his seniors, to Bow Street, on Mr. Graham's resignation.

"A Bow Street officer or two were ordered to attend, that there might be an *appearance* at least of some

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attention to legal authority; but it was *only* for the appearance, as the foreigner, Mr. Capper, of the Alien Office, and another individual "*rushed in before the officers, and plundered the table at first.*" Here, be it observed, that, if the parties who were playing had resisted this unauthorized, this illegal violence, and death had ensued, it would have been *justifiable homicide*, whereas, if any one of the persons at play had been killed, it would have been *murder.* "*Then* our officers came, and *found but very little.* And then, this person, *who had no authority whatever, searched all the gentlemen* who remained in the *room, and took the money out of their pockets.* A more audacious outrage was never committed. Now, be it further remarked, that Mr. Capper, a clerk in the Alien Office, and not *then* under the authority of Mr. Beckett, went to his house in a uniform, and with a drawn sword! So that the gentlemen evidently complied with the demand to deliver their money under an impression of fear!

"No less a sum than *four hundred pounds* was got possession of by these unauthorized persons, which appears to be independent of one hundred and odd pounds ordered to be delivered out of the gentlemen's pockets!"

This, in fact, appears to have been nothing more nor less than a robbery of the persons who were engaged in play.

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§ *The Smugglers.*

There is always something romantic in the accounts of these daring smuggling expeditions. To this day at Folkestone are shown cellars and caves on the steep cliff side, where the houses and cottages are built for the convenience of hiding contraband wares, while old boatmen tell of the six-oared boats which of a fine night could be rowed across to the French coast. Mr. Richardson, in his recollections, describes how gangs of forty or fifty smugglers might be seen on the Dover and Brighton roads, well mounted on strong hardy horses, with half-ankers of brandy and Hollands slung across their saddle-bows, well armed, and prepared to resist force with force, making their way to London, and crossing Westminster Bridge.

"When a boy I lived in a house my father had in a wild part of Surrey, Combe, on the left of Croydon. The house was almost isolated; it had originally been a farmhouse, and was surrounded with barns, stables, and outhouses. We were frequently disturbed in the night by the most unaccountable noises; the trampling of many horses, accompanied with the hum of voices, &c.

"It was not long before we discovered the cause of all this. About twenty or thirty men and horses were in the habit of quartering themselves, as their occasions required, in our barn. They were a mixed congregation of 'Kentish Knockers,' or smugglers from the Kentish Knock, gipsies, and assistant contraban-

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dists from London. Here they arranged in what manner to 'run' their goods to the metropolis, and, having done so, retired, and left the barn to its proper owners. They never committed the slightest injury to the place, nor did we ever suffer in any way from their depredations. We certainly received a hint not to be too curious in prying into their proceedings, which we took in good part, and as they left us alone we did not meddle with their affairs. The New Forest and the Hampshire coast were the scenes of similar transactions. The smugglers and their confederates were too strong for the ordinary force of the Custom House, and when extraordinary force was brought against them, many sanguinary encounters were the result.

"A man who has long retired from this kind of business is still living, and after having weathered, both metaphorically and actually, many a storm, and been in many a fearful encounter with parties of the Custom House officers, coast-guards, and revenue-cutters, is in possession of a good estate in Oxfordshire, respected by his neighbours, and beloved by the poor of his neighbourhood, to whom he has been a very active benefactor.

"On one occasion a considerable quantity of brandy, gin, &c., being arrived off the coast of Christ Church, Hants, and the weather being exceedingly rough, all the boats employed in landing contraband cargoes were staved by the tremendous surf on the beach.

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Without delay he and upwards of a hundred of his followers marched up, about an hour after midnight, to the house of this gentleman.

"P—— knocked loudly at the door, and the gentleman, aroused from his sleep, put his head out of window, and demanded what was the occasion of the visit at that hour. 'Oh, Mr. B——,' answered P——, 'we want your father's boat, all our own are rendered useless, and lie staved on the beach.'

"'Why, P——,' replied Mr. B——, 'I cannot lend you the boat; you know that would not do. I say I cannot lend it, but at the same time I cannot prevent you from breaking into the barn in which it is locked up, and taking it away with you.'

"'Ay, ay, sir! many thanks, and good night.'

"In the course of a very few minutes the padlock on the barn doors was broken, the doors opened, and the boat hoisted on the shoulders of a dozen or fourteen sturdy operatives, transported to the beach, and launched. The whole cargo was landed in safety, the boat safely returned, and a new padlock replaced that which had been broken."

The Bow Street officers were often despatched down to the Kentish coast when a seizure was in prospect. In October, 1827, application was made to Sir Richard Birnie for the assistance of one of his principal officers to apprehend some of a most desperate gang of smugglers, who had assailed and wounded

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several of the persons engaged in the Preventive Service on the coast of Dorchester. Captain Jackson, inspector on that station, and Lieutenant Sparks, who acts under him, had received instructions to seize upon the smugglers, and Sir Richard Birnie directed Bishop to join on this hazardous occasion. "The smugglers had, on the day the conflict took place, landed 120 tubs of spirits on the beach, when they heard the report of a pistol (the signal from the watch of the Preventive Service) amongst the cliffs. The smugglers were armed with swords, pistols, and instruments called 'swingles,' which are made like flails, and with which they can knock people's brains out. Those instruments are a new invention as weapons of attack, and there is no possibility of guarding against them, on account of their capacity of flying round the body. The place where the spirits were landed is called Ringbourn, and is in the vicinity of St. Alban's Head, and a troop of the Preventive Service speedily attended to the summons, and attacked the gang. There were between seventy and eighty of the smugglers, and no more than ten of the Preventive Service, so that the latter were, of course, overpowered. Several were wounded upon both sides, and it is believed that two of the smugglers were killed upon the spot. The swingles were found, upon this occasion, to do great execution—heads and arms were broken with them, and we understand that all

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round the coast they are now in use. Some of the Preventive Service had taken particular notice of the ringleaders of the gang, and warrants were issued for their apprehension. The captain of the gang keeps a public-house called the 'Ship,' near Woolbridge, on the Weymouth Road, his name is Lucas. Captain Jackson, his assistant, and Bishop, went well armed, at two o'clock in the morning, to Thomas Lucas's house. Bishop knocked at the door gently, and the smuggler asked, in a gruff tone, 'Who is there?' 'It's only I, Mr. Lucas,' replied Bishop, 'Mrs. Smith's little girl—I want a little drop of brandy for mother, for she is bad in her bowels.' 'Very well, my dear,' cried Lucas, and opening the door, found himself in the formidable grasp of the police-officer."

A more exciting conflict took place shortly after:—

"Considerable interest was excited at this office on Friday morning, in consequence of the news having been circulated that a desperate gang of smugglers had been apprehended in the county of Kent, and would be brought up for examination.

"About half-past twelve o'clock George Ransley, Samuel Bailey, Richard Bailey, Richard Wire, William Wire, Thomas Gilliam, Charles Giles, and Thomas Donard, all men of fierce aspect, were brought to the office, and charged with the wilful murder of William Morgan, a Quartermaster of his Majesty's ship *Ramillies*, on the beach at Dover. The prisoners

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were all dressed in smock-frocks, with the exception of Ransley, the captain of the gang, who is a very fine-looking man, apparently possessing great muscular strength.

William Pickett deposed that, on the 29th of July last he was stationed near the bathing-machines at Dover; between one and two o'clock in the morning a party of smugglers, fifty or sixty in number, attempted to land some goods from a boat. Witness endeavoured to discharge his pistol as an alarm, but it did not go off. Deceased then came up, fired his pistol behind him, with the same object, and was immediately shot by the smugglers. Witness was engaged with several of the smugglers, and wounded some of them with his cutlass—he captured thirty-three tubs. Morgan died a few minutes afterwards."

One of the smugglers then turned "King's evidence." This was Michael Horn, a good-looking young man, who made the following statement :—

"I met Ransley about ten o'clock at night; none of the prisoners were then present. We went to a place called the Palm Trees, about two miles from Dover, and were there joined by all the prisoners except Giles, and several others, to the number of sixty. We were mustered in the presence of Ransley. Twelve or sixteen of the party were armed with muskets; all the prisoners were armed except Giles and Ransley, the leader of the party. We went to the

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bathing machines at Dover, about twelve or one o'clock. Soon after a boat was run ashore. At this moment Ransley said, Hallo, come on, and placed an armed party at each side of the boat. We landed several tubs of brandy and gin, and carried off about seventy. I heard several shots fired, and I afterwards heard that a man named Morgan was killed ; we were interrupted by one of the Coast Blockade party. Ransley paid me 23*s*. for my night's work."

The counsel said it would be necessary to confine the prisoners in a place of more security than any afforded on the sea coast of the county of Kent, as it was a notorious fact that the smugglers had broken open or pulled down every prison in that part of the county.

Sir R. Birnie said, about five years ago, they broke open the Gaol of Dover at noonday, in the presence of several magistrates, and rescued fifteen of their gang. One of the officers of the Blockade Service now present complained that he found some difficulty in inducing the magistrates of the Cinque Ports to back warrants against smugglers, as it was said they were engaged in smuggling themselves.

This view of persons of superior station favouring the proceedings of the smugglers is confirmed by Sir R. Birnie's directions to some Bow Street officers whom he was sending down to Kent to deal with their malpractices. He said,—

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"Ruthven, on your arrival in Kent it will be your duty to apply to some magistrate to back the warrants, and be sure you do not apply to one of the magistrates of the Cinque Ports, lest the object you have in view be thwarted by the party giving information to the persons accused, as was the case in a very recent instance; but go before some of the magistrates of the county who are, I believe, most of them honourable men. Very recently, when Bond, the officer, went into Kent with a warrant to apprehend a smuggler, on going before the Mayor of ——, to get the warrant signed, he was detained for some time, and the Mayor, in the interim, gave information to the wife of the smuggler, who immediately absconded." Sir Richard said he had affidavits in his possession to support what he had stated.

§ *Informers.*

A curious feature in this routine of magisterial jurisdiction was the recognition of the services of informers, who drove a brisk and profitable trade in bringing publicans before the courts for selling without licence. Thus, in 1828, one Jackson had been fined 10*l.* on the information of one of these men, and had appealed. These gentry were not, however, regarded with favour by the Bench, as will be seen from the reception accorded to this person when he reappeared a few days later with a fresh charge against

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the same publican. The papers took care to report the case in rather a minute and dramatic fashion, with the dialogues that took place on such occasions, particularly when Sir R. Birnie—their favourite performer—took a prominent part. The clerk expressed his surprise, and on handing the information to Sir Richard Birnie, said "it was rather hard upon the defendant to appear twice in the same week on a similar charge. I think, for my part, that it would be no more than modest in a common informer to abstain from all fresh proceedings while an appeal is pending."

"Modesty and a common informer," exclaimed Colonel Clitheroe, the magistrate of Brentford, who entered the office just as Mr. Woods gave utterance to the words; "what an anomaly! Why, who the deuce was ever absurd enough to imagine that modesty and a common informer ever travelled together? If you want an instance of the purity of common informers, I can furnish you with a famous one. Some time ago one of these fellows, Johnson, summoned the driver of the Letham coach for an alleged offence, and then wrung out of the hands of the poor devil three guineas for compromising the affair."

"*Sir Richard* (smiling): Colonel, here is Mr. Johnson, he can answer for himself.

Colonel Clitheroe (making a low bow): Oh, Mr. Johnson, I did not know you were present; I had not

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the pleasure of knowing you before. You have heard what I have said, and I now tell you that I used every means to make you out; and I can assure you, that if I had established a charge against you, I should have dealt with your modestyship without either delicacy or ceremony.

Johnson: I feel convinced the magistrates must admit that I have always done my business fairly and properly. He denied what was stated by Colonel Clitheroe.

Colonel Clitheroe: I have not the smallest doubt on my mind, but that you are the same. However, it is well for you that I cannot prove the fact. I know you all well enough; you are a d—d set of fellows, who go about laying informations, and then levy large contributions from the poor devils, under the pretext of making the matter up.

Sir Richard Birnie: It is an infamous system, and it is high time that a stop should be put to it.

Colonel Clitheroe: It is indeed, Sir Richard. But for my own part, I have come to the resolution of never receiving an information from any one of these fellows again. Mind, Johnson, I now tell you never to dare to show your nose near my house, for I will never receive any information of you or any of the tribe. When you next come down my way, you had better go at once to the Magpie and Stump.

Johnson: I never was doing business in Brentford in all my life.

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Sir Richard Birnie: Oh, come, that story is long enough. I am really sorry, Johnson, to see you harassing a useful and well-regulated house in this way. This house is very different from Grub's and other houses. As Mr. Jackson has appealed, you must excuse me, I cannot take this information.

Johnson received back the information, making a most reverential stoop, in indication of his submission."

Later we are told of "several shrewd fellows who have made themselves very busy lately in laying informations against pawnbrokers, for taking more interest upon their pledges than they are allowed by law. For this purpose some trifling article is pledged, and when it has remained long enough for the legal interest to amount to three farthings, it is redeemed, when the pawnbroker, in some cases—doubtless inadvertently, demands a penny, and thereby renders himself liable to the information. One of these farthing informations came on to be heard before Sir Richard Birnie. The informer gave his name and address James Betts, watchmaker, Gee Street, Clerkenwell. Mr. Adolphus addressed the bench, and submitted that the witness was entirely unworthy of credit. Among the multitude of other arguments he insinuated that these 'fellows,' the witness, informer, &c., were in the habit of throwing down the penny, and running out of the shop without the farthing in exchange."

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§ *A Gaming-House "Grab."*

The "worthy" magistrate, in serious cases, was expected to put himself at the head of his force, and lead them on, in what was often a service of danger. We thus hear of them bursting in upon assembled conspirators, or making "raids," as they were called, upon coiners and gamesters. It would be difficult to conceive of Mr. Flowers, or Mr. Vaughan, or Sir James Ingham, in this militant aspect. Such incidents were full of excitement.

Here is an account of one such spirited attempt which took place in 1822, and was described as "A gaming-house *grab*."

"Yesterday the police-office at Bow Street was crowded to excess, in consequence of a general capture made the preceding night of a large party of roulette-players at a house, No. 16, Bury Street, St. James's. It appeared that in consequence of information given by a young man, to Thomas Halls, Esq., the magistrate, a plan was laid for the informer to go into the play-room ten minutes before the officers, and by the time he had taken his station and observed who were at play, the magistrate and his party were to enter by stratagem or force and apprehend the gamesters. In pursuance of this arrangement, Mr. Halls, Mr. Richmond, Vickery, Ruthven, and eight patrole, went to the place of rendezvous, and the informer having ob-

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tained admission very readily, the police secured themselves in a long passage leading to the first barrier or entrance door, when Mr. Richmond rang the bell for admission. A porter opened the little wicket, and asked Mr. Richmond his business; he, Mr. Richmond, said, 'I understand you play at roulette?' the porter answered, 'Yes, but I don't know you.' Mr. Richmond said it was all right, and handed him a card; the door was then partially opened, but it is presumed the porter caught a sight of the officers, and instantly closed it. A formal demand being then made in the name of Mr. Halls, the magistrate, for admission, and it not being complied with, the patrole began battering with the mall that was left in the house of Marrs, by the murderer of him and his family, and also with the crow-bar left at the house of Williamson, who was also shortly afterwards murdered by, no doubt, the same hand; but before the breach was made, one of the officers was put over the wall, and, by opening the outer door, let in the magistrate and the whole party; when Ruthven, having burst a pannel of the inner door by one blow of the mall, Mr. Richmond sprang through it, and, followed by Drummond, one of the patrole, ascended the stairs, and found the gaming-room in great confusion, but no person in it; they ran up another flight, and in a chimney they found seven men piled on each other, whom they were obliged to pull down by the legs. The other parts of the

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house were then searched, and thirteen other persons were found, some concealed in a coal-cellar, and others in a closet. They were all assembled in one room, and Mr. Halls directed their names to be taken, and they were then conveyed to different watch-houses until yesterday, when they were brought before Mr. Halls and Mr. Marshall. Ruthven proved that he found the following memorandum:—Mr. Gill is to put into the bank, 311; Mr. Odell, 291; silver, 211; sovereigns, 81. In addition to this, William Phillips, the informer, proved that he was in the gaming-room when the magistrate demanded admittance; that roulette was then playing. That on the first alarm, Odell seized the bank and ran out of the room with it, and the roulette wheel was separated from the table, and the players ran and secreted themselves in various parts of the house. The magistrate convicted all the six persons, who were proved to be in the room at play, and sentenced Page and Paton to one month, and the other four to three months' imprisonment and hard labour in the House of Correction, and all the others were ordered to enter into recognizances not to haunt any gaming-house for twelve months."

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APPENDIX.

It will be interesting to supply a few notes concerning the magistrates of later generations, who sat upon the Bow Street bench. Mr. Hall, or Halls, might be considered the last of the old school of magistrates; and when he retired, in 1864, one of the Marlborough Street magistrates was summoned to take his place. This was a genial Irishman, of much sound sense, knowledge of the world, and good-humour, the well-known Sir Thomas Henry, who was duly knighted, an honour already declined by only two of his predecessors, Messrs. Hall and Read. He administered his duties for many years to the satisfaction of all concerned. He had that liking or toleration for social enjoyment—theatrical and of other kinds—which is found to be a merit in the judicious functionary, who is thus likely to understand better, and tolerate the various transactions brought before him, and which a more rigid judge would probably misconceive. He died in June of the year 1876.[1]

[1] "By-the-bye," writes Mr. George Grossmith, who knew him well, "when I was speaking to you of his coolness and aplomb on the

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The present staff of Bow Street magistrates are well known to be painstaking, conscientious men, furnished with a store of good common sense, and not without distinct points of character. There are the veteran Sir James Ingham—the *doyen* of all the magistrates of the metropolis, Mr. Vaughan, and Mr. Flowers. Mr. Grossmith, who, to his other gifts of increasing the gaiety of the community, adds that of touching gaily, and with a light and pleasant pen, the humours of the hour, a few years ago contributed to *Punch* some lively sketches of characters and manners at Bow Street. In them will be found the idiosyncrasies and perhaps oddities of the different magistrates, touched, however, in goodhumoured style. The series is entitled, "Very Trying," and will be recalled by many. The illustrations were by Mr. Harry Furniss. Here is one of the little comedies or farces, in which the solemn impressiveness of Mr. Vaughan is con-

bench, I intended to give you a forcible instance of it. He had just sentenced a woman to imprisonment for some violent assault, when she suddenly stooped down, took off her boot (no lady's drawing-room shoe, I can assure you), and flung it at his head. It flew to within an inch of his ear, and smashed the glass of the book-case behind him. I think every man in court immediately ducked his head, except Sir Thomas, who never moved, and did not even raise his eyes from the book in which he was taking notes. He was a sound lawyer, and a trifle vain of the *coup-de-grâce* which he knew how to inflict on some noisy barrister or solicitor, after which he would slyly glance round at his audience, especially to the reporters, as much as to say, 'I had him there.'"

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trasted with the bewilderment of some young offender who is before him :—

Mr. Warn (*Vaughan*), *the learned magistrate, addressing the prisoner :* Prisoner at the bar, presuming that you are unrepresented either by counsel or an attorney, do you intend to interrogate the officer ?

The Prisoner : What ?

Gaoler (*colloquially interpreting the learned Magistrate*) *:* Got any questions to ask ?

The Prisoner : I don't know.

Mr. Warn : That is a statement. However, if you desire to address the Court upon this charge, you shall offer your defence now, as I understand there is no further evidence to be adduced either *pro* or *con.*

The Prisoner What ?

Gaoler (*again interpreting the learned Magistrate*) : Got anything to say ?

The Prisoner : Yus, sir. I didn't know I was doin' any wrong.

Mr. Warn (*proceeding to sum up in the simple and explicit manner characteristic of this particular learned magistrate*) : Prisoner, you have been brought before me on the sworn testimony of a Metropolitan constable for begging within the precincts of the monument erected *in memoriam* to NELSON. It is, as you must be aware, a charge under the Vagrant Act, and I am bound to admit, it appears to me there is a *primâ-facie* case against you. You have made no attempt to rebut the

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evidence of the officer, and I can only, as an *ultimatum*, give credence to his evidence, which admits of little doubt in my mind. The defence (if a defence it can be designated at all) that you have chosen to set up, is to my mind unworthy of the invention you have thought necessary to bestow upon it. You may not have perused the sections of the Act of Parliament bearing upon this particular charge, but every child must be aware, from maternal or paternal information, that the act of begging in any form is *contra leges*. Your defence is, therefore, totally unworthy of consideration. Now, I warn you, if *in future* you will persist in pursuing this nefarious method of existence, I shall have to sentence you to a term of incarceration without the option of a pecuniary penalty. Pray do not treat this caution with indifference. Upon this occasion, however, your liberty will be afforded you.

The Prisoner (*bursting into tears*): Oh! how long have I got? Oh! what have I got?

We are then introduced to Mr. Bowers, who is supposed to lighten the proceedings with occasional merry jests.

Mr. Bowers: Who is Alf Watson?

Complainant: He is a packer at the Stores, you know.

Mr. Bowers: Well, I didn't know, but I'm always pleased to receive information. I hope he'll stick to his packing-cases, and keep out of assault cases.

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(*Laughter.*) However, we had better not interrupt the evidence.

Complainant: Let's see—where was I?—oh, I know. Well, your worship, the man in front, who I thought was Alf Watson, turned out to be defendant.

Mr. Bowers: What made you think it was Alf Watson.

Complainant: The back of his head looked like Alf's.

Mr. Bowers: Oh, I see—a phrenological similarity.

Complainant: May be, your worship. All I know is, some people's backs of their head is more recognizable than the fronts of their face. Look at the back of my head. (*The witness here turned his back to the learned magistrate, and displayed a triangular bald patch, which created considerable amusement in court.*)

Mr. Bowers: It would be as well, I think, to let the evidence now proceed without interruption.

Complainant: Well, your worship, I calls out, "Hulloh, Alf Watson!" and I leant over, and touched him gently on the back of his head with my stick—just so. (*The complainant lightly tapped with his stick the ledge of the witness-box.*)

Mr. Bowers: A rather *striking* illustration.

Defendant (*interrupting*): Not a bit like it, your worship. He tapped me like this. (*The defendant*

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here struck with his stick a tremendous blow on the ledge of the prisoner's dock.)

Mr. Bowers: I cannot help thinking that that is a violent assault upon the court. (*Loud laughter, in which the chief usher joined.*) Now I think we must let the case proceed without interruption.

Complainant: At all events, your worship, I didn't hurt him.

Defendant Oh, didn't you? Perhaps your worship would like to look at my head. (*The defendant turned his back to the magistrate, and displayed a large contusion.*)

Mr. Bowers: Of course it's impossible to judge at this distance, but it appears to me to resemble an extra development of the bump of Philoprogenitiveness. However, I will hear your defence at the proper time, defendant; so please don't let us interrupt the witness.

END OF VOL. I.

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